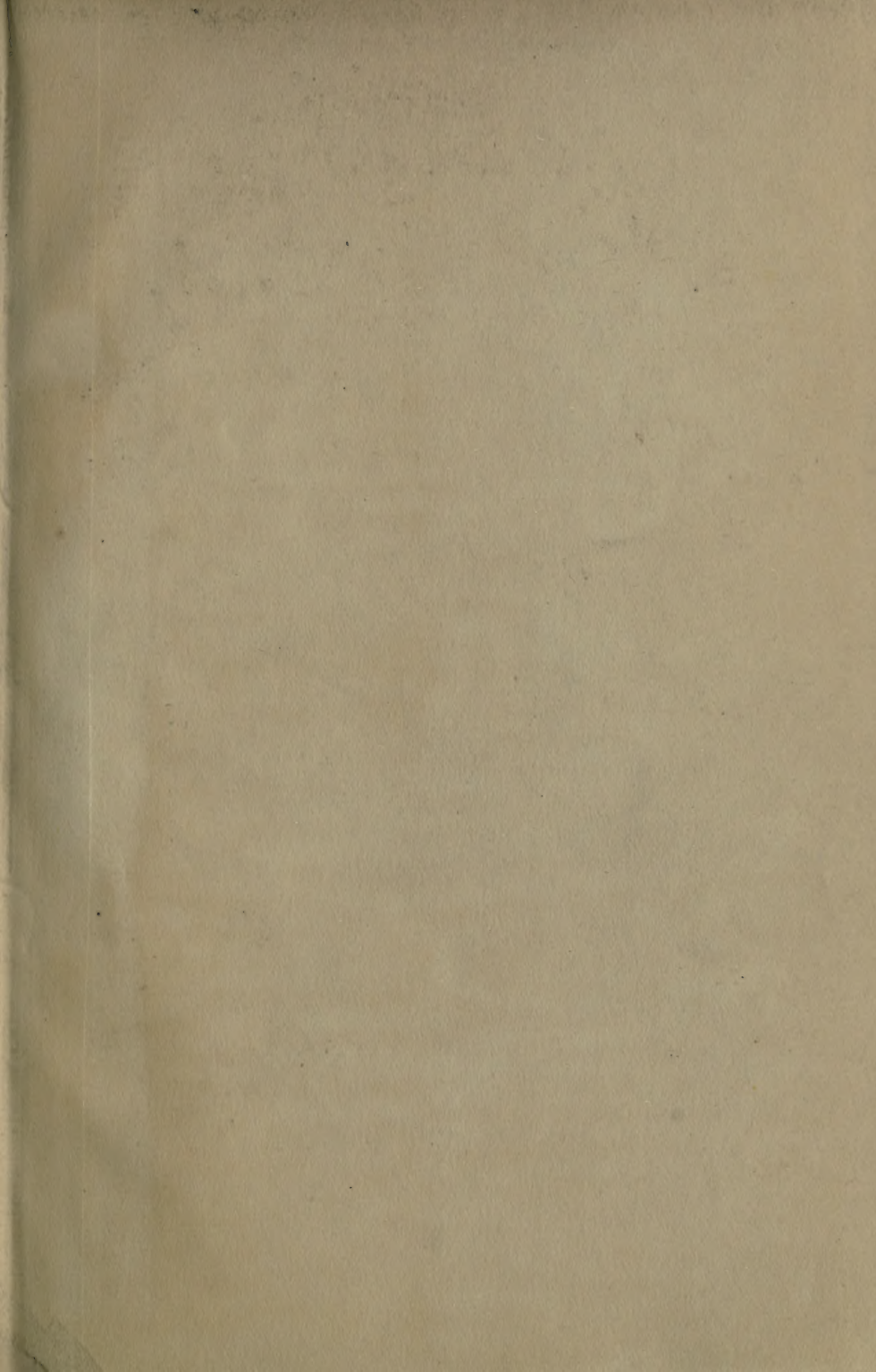







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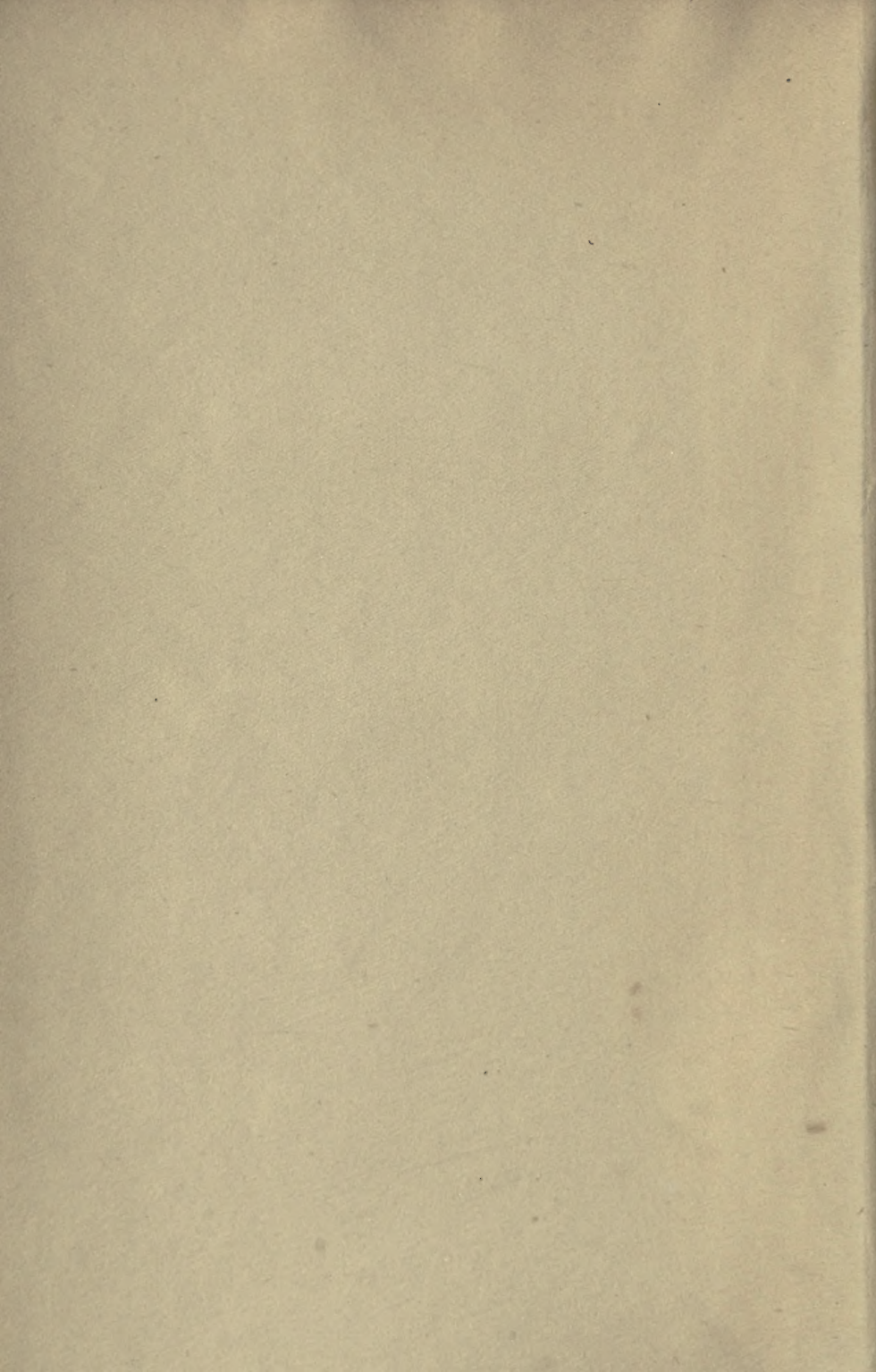




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SOCIAL PURPOSE

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# SOCIAL PURPOSE

A CONTRIBUTION TO A  
PHILOSOPHY OF CIVIC SOCIETY

BY

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TO OUR FRIENDS

HENRY JONES, JOHN MACCUNN, JOHN S. MACKENZIE

THIS BOOK IS

GRATEFULLY AND AFFECTIONATELY DEDICATED

"The world of Fact, artistic or æsthetic, scientific, moral, political, economic, is what the spirit builds round itself, creating it out of its own substance, while it itself in creating it, grows within. . . . Nothing is or can be alien, still less hostile to it, for 'in wisdom has it made them all.'"

J. A. SMITH.



## PREFACE

THIS book is the outcome of a series of lectures delivered at the University College of Wales, Aberystwyth, in August 1916 to the Summer School of the Civic and Moral Education League. The lectures have been considerably altered and enlarged ; but it has not been thought necessary to remove all traces of the original lecture form.

It may be thought that we have allowed ourselves to spend too much time on the discussion of abstract philosophical doctrines. But we have felt that the serious discussion of every particular social or political question depends in the last resort on a coherent philosophical conception of the nature of civic society. One cannot analyse any social structure without raising the central problem of the principle of social organization in the mind of man ; and when that issue has been raised, one must be ready to face it in all its severity and complexity. It is, we believe, a fault of much recent social philosophy that it makes its problem too artificially simple. It produces an admirably precise and lucid list of diversified social institutions, whose single defect is that it is untrue to the unity of the human spirit.

For that reason while the endeavour of a considerable part of this book has been to define as accurately as possible the character of various institutions, and to bring out their mutual relations, yet in so far as that attempt is mainly analytical, it would, if it stood by itself, offer something less than what we believe to be the truth. However manifold the forms in which social purpose expresses itself, its nature and principle are one and

indivisible ; and our aim has been to demonstrate this, first by a consideration of the basis of civic society in the mind of man, and then by a more detailed study of the working out of the constructive social impulse in different social institutions.

Whatever vitality there is in the reaction against the long tradition of political theory which began with Plato and has continued in the great line of his Idealist successors comes mainly from the apparent neglect by certain of its supporters of real differentiations of social structure and interest. In this respect recent theory has been most valuable. We have tried to avail ourselves of its help, and in the light of what has been gained to restate the essentials of the classical Idealist conception in such a way as to show that there is room in it for the utmost diversity of social functions. But the recognition of the strength and importance of this recent criticism makes it the more incumbent on us that we should, so far as we can, present the positive philosophical case for our doctrine, and its foundation in the mind of man.

With this object in view, these lectures were planned in the order in which they are here presented. Each author has carefully revised the work of the other ; but it may be mentioned that the two divisions of the book correspond roughly to the contributions of the authors in the order in which their names are given below. The exceptions to this arrangement are Chapters VII and XIII in Part II.

J. H. MUIRHEAD.

H. J. W. HETHERINGTON.



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## BIBLIOGRAPHY

No attempt is made to give an exhaustive list of the books bearing on the different subjects treated in these lectures. Nor does the list include all the books which have been useful to the writers. It merely offers certain suggestions which will provide a useful introduction to the more detailed study of the various topics.

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## PART I

### *THE PRINCIPLE OF SOCIAL PURPOSE*





## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTORY

#### § 1. CIVIC SOCIETY.

OUR subject is narrower than sociology, wider than political philosophy. The word "civic" is ambiguous and philosophers have added to the ambiguity by assigning to it a technical meaning differing from any recognized in popular language. Its commonest use is perhaps to indicate what is municipal and local as contrasted with what is political and national, but it is used by Hegel and his followers in a still narrower sense to mark off those forms of social life in which the free choice of individuals is a prominent feature as contrasted with those founded on natural affinity on the one hand, the State with its compulsory powers on the other. But in addition to these two meanings there is a third according to which the word denotes rather a stage in the development of society than an element in its constitution. The study of early history has familiarized us with the existence of organized society ages before anything corresponding to a *res publica* or public interest was consciously recognized or the ideas of law and government had emerged from the confused background of custom and tradition. As distinguished from this stage "civic society" comes into existence with the conscious recognition of rights and duties as the condition of the maintenance of corporate life and of a central power capable of enforcing them. It is with the rise of civic society in this sense that history

may be said to begin, for it is at this stage first that the community acquires the power of conscious self-direction. The citizen in this sense is not merely the dweller in the city circle (the *πόλις* or *urbs*), but whosoever habitually identifies himself with the *purposes* of the community, and is endowed with the rights which are the condition of their fulfilment. The development of this civic consciousness for the first time in the world was the signal glory of the Greek and Roman world. The *Civis Romanus* might be a dweller in the Suburra or a shepherd on the downs of Aberystwyth; he bore a name that was the symbol of law and order, justice and human dignity. It is true that the term with its kindred group of words fell into abeyance when there were "no citizens but only subjects," but it has always been ready to spring to the lips when times are favourable to the recognition that law and government are only a very small part of the bond that unites men to one another as *socii* in a single corporate life and that laws and institutions derive whatever authority they have, not from the force that lies behind them, but from purposes that lie deep in the soul of the nation and from the largest and most potent part of its will.

## § 2. IN WHAT SENSE HERE TAKEN.

Had these lectures been planned before the war, it might have seemed natural to interpret the subject in the second of the above senses with the view of submitting that part of our common life which is nearer to us than the State, but farther from us than family or neighbourhood—the whole middle region of which the industrial system, important though it be, is only a part—to a more careful and complete analysis than is usual in social philosophy. But the war has settled all this for us. If, viewed in its origin in men's ideas, it teaches one thing more than another, it surely is the danger of limited



conceptions of civic life, and of the import of our common citizenship. We should wrong ourselves if we declared the larger conception to have been no part of our minds before the war broke out. But in some at least it must be acknowledged it formed a very small and a diminishing part. Not only is civic consciousness in the larger sense a matter of slow growth and apt to lag behind the consciousness of economic and sectional interests ; its growth is apt to be arrested by the increasing complexity of a civilization that makes it more and more possible for the individual to escape the immediate call of civic responsibility. Even in those in whom political consciousness was alive and active, it was mixed with an alloy of private or sectional interest, pursued often with little regard to the interest of the whole. The problem was not what and how to give to the State, but what and how to get from it.

We may fairly say that all this has been changed by the war. The smouldering or smoky heat of our common citizenship has burst into a blaze, opening to most of us new depths of our national life. If this had been all, the war would have been a summons to do everything in our power to stimulate and direct this new-born consciousness, but in the face of the importance of present practical duties, we might have been content to leave theory to a more convenient season. But this, as everybody knows, is not all. With the birth or rebirth of civic consciousness in ourselves has gone the discovery (and it has been a real discovery even to those who, by virtue of their familiarity with history and theory, might have known better) that there are different kinds of civic consciousness. Our own we have at once recognized as one kind, that of our enemies an entirely different kind, and it is by this time a commonplace to say that, confronting each other at the present moment in a ring of trenches throughout Europe and Asia, we have not so much two armed groups of nations as two entirely different and incompatible ideals of civic life.

## § 3. THEORY AND COMMON SENSE.

Even so it might be said we can afford to leave it there : " Right is might, and the war is itself deciding which of these ideals is the truer." There are even those who maintain that the last thing we want is theory. What is wrong with Germany is just that she has lost touch with common sense and missed the plain way of civilization in the mazes of abstract theory. We cannot here attempt to answer with any fullness the great question raised by the former of these contentions.<sup>1</sup> It must suffice to notice that whatever we say as to the converse proposition, there is a quite definite sense in which we must maintain that right is might. The right is that which alone can enlist all the forces of human nature on its behalf. But it is necessary that it *should* enlist them, and this takes time. Wrong may be earlier in the field and more awake to the requirements of the situation. In this respect the children of this world may be wiser than the children of light. Though they cannot marshal all the elements of human nature on their side, they may marshal some. The others they may drug, deceive, or intimidate, and this may give them a temporary advantage. The same answer applies, *mutatis mutandis*, to the argument in favour of common sense. What is wrong with Germany is just that she has lost touch with common sense, but the fact that common sense may thus be sophisticated and led astray by theory is one that common sense must take account of and provide against by every means in its power. Among these means the principal must always be a theory that requires no sophistry to commend it, but appeals to the conscience and reason of mankind as an interpretation of their own deepest experience. Science in general has been called " systematized common sense." This is an excellent account of what we might call science

<sup>1</sup> See the excellent article by Professor Mackenzie in *The International Crisis: The Theory of the State* (Oxford, 1916) on " Might and Right."

triumphant. But it is also true of that kind of science militant we call theory, which is merely common sense with all its forces awake and organized for resistance to error. It is just this kind of vigilance that has been conspicuously absent in recent political theory in Germany, and which requires at the present moment to be cultivated in countries that would escape her plagues. It is to this that Lord Bryce summons us in the Introduction to the volume just quoted.

"This war," he writes, "has shaken the foundations of the world of thought as well as of the world of action. In the last eighteen months we have learned how formidable a theory of the State which we in Britain have never held and which we deem erroneous may become. It is more than anything else the German theory of the State—the doctrine of the omnipotence of the State, of its right to absorb and override the individual, to prevail against morality, indeed practically to deny the existence of international morality where State power is concerned—it is this deadly theory which is at the bottom of German aggression. As we are fully determined to resist that aggression, so we ought to conduct both here and abroad an intellectual war against that theory. And in order to destroy it we must begin by understanding it and by having a sound and coherent theory of our own."

It was recently reported that a distinguished politician called forth vociferous applause by telling his audience that "a wild beast is at large. It is no good reasoning with it. It is no good appealing to the civilized world about it. There is one thing to be done and we shall do it—to shoot it." This may be true, but if you leave the wild theory at large you have only shot the body—the soul may still go marching along, and it is the soul that is the real danger to civilization.

#### § 4. THEORY AND "RECONSTRUCTION."

This is what makes civic theory so vital an interest at the present time. What is wrong in Germany is not



that it has a theory, but that it has a false theory, and we shall have failed to gather the whole moral of the war unless we have made clear to ourselves what precisely is wrong about it and how it is to be corrected. Nor is it an interest that can safely be postponed. Already in every department of national life men's minds are occupying themselves with the reconstructions that must follow the conclusion of the war; and if we are to avoid the confusion of principles that on general admission was our chief source of weakness, this can only be done by a clear vision on the part of the nation as to the end it seeks to accomplish—the meaning of the civilization it is seeking to promote. To take one or two of the many questions that are waiting solution, we are seeking to apply new principles to the organization of industry. They are to be the principles of a better civilization, a truer citizenship. They are also to be principles of increased productivity. Are these two different from each other or are they ultimately the same? And is it possible to apply to industry the saying, "Seek first the kingdom of the God and all these things will be added"? It is the same question that meets us when we turn from the problem of industrial to that of political organization. In the idea of a "commonwealth" we are seeking to realize a wider citizenship. Of what kind and scope is it to be? Looked at from within the nation, it is demanded by all modern conditions that government shall be strong and efficient. It must have the best knowledge at its disposal in order to act wisely, the greatest concentration of purpose and power that it may act when occasion requires promptly and decisively. But it is also demanded that it shall reflect the mind and will of the whole community, wise and ignorant, strong and weak—in a word that it shall be democratic. Is this demand compatible with the other? If not (and all appearances are against it) on what ground, in view of the tremendous forces that modern society holds in solution within it, can the ideal of democracy be defended against the advocates

of efficiency? And looking beyond the nation, our citizenship must be a national one, but it must also have an outlook beyond the nation. It must be European, ultimately a citizenship of the world. What are we to say of this all-inclusive citizenship? Is the idea of it of the essence of human consciousness, and is it true that no State of the world can be a stable and satisfying one that fails to embody it? Or is it a good-natured delusion of humanitarian enthusiasts, bound periodically to recur but doomed because of more potent forces in human nature to equally periodical disappointment? Questions like these can only be answered by experience doubtless, but by an experience in which grounded faith in the fundamental tendencies and in the possibilities of human nature must be a decisive factor.

#### § 5. EDUCATION AND CIVIC THEORY.

Going deeper than all these problems of organization, because concerning the mind and the will of the coming generation, on whom the maintenance and development of the foundations which we lay depend, is the problem of education. What we have suffered from in the past and what may sterilize all our schemes for the future is the confusion of principles and the strong cross-currents of opposing interests that prevail in this field. Nowhere is there more need of a central and guiding idea, nor is there any that has been named that can compete with that of "citizenship." There can be no doubt that the idea of education as a training in citizenship has received a stimulus from the war. When educational reformers are not talking of increased intelligence and energy for production, they are talking of increase of patriotism. It is felt that the future of the country depends on the willingness of the coming generation to undertake burdens and practise modes of self-sacrifice unknown to their fathers, and that for the creation of the spirit of loyalty and devotion which will enable it to meet them

we must depend on the schools. But just here many have seen a grave danger looming ahead,<sup>1</sup> which as closely concerning the programme of the Society under whose auspices these lectures are given deserves your particular attention. Already before the war the State was more and more assuming control over all grades of education, primary, secondary, technical. This tendency will probably be strengthened by the war. If as this League desires, and as is probable, the State seeks to exercise a direct influence on instruction in citizenship, it is not likely to forget *itself*. The chief object of this instruction will be to secure the attachment of the rising generation to the State's own ideals. And with this we have the nose of the camel in the tent. There will be the danger of exalting patriotism in the sense of devotion to the near and the present over citizenship in the sense of devotion to the remoter interests of humanity. It was just thus, it will be remembered, Germany began a century ago, with what results we know. The ideas of Fichte the idealist philosopher became the ideas of Bismarck the realist politician; the ideas of Humboldt the advocate of liberty the ideas of a long line of Prussian Ministers of Education. Already before the war German educationists noted with concern that the ideas of free citizenship were in dangerous abeyance. "Our secondary scholars," wrote Dr. Kerschensteiner,<sup>2</sup> "leave school without the slightest interest in civic questions." It may be said that this was due to the absence of any tradition of civic freedom in Germany; in England it is different. This, of course, is true. "Such ignorance," the same writer adds, "becomes intelligible when we remember that our secondary schools date their organizations from a time when there were no citizens but only

<sup>1</sup> Since this chapter was written the difficulty has been stated with exceptional ability by Mr. Bertrand Russell in his *Principles of Social Reconstruction*, and assumed to be insuperable.

<sup>2</sup> *Education v. Citizenship* (1909), English translation, p. 57.



subjects and rulers." But France cannot be said to be without civic tradition. Yet we know the trouble in which, before the war, she was involved, owing precisely to the conflict between the idea of a perhaps somewhat narrow patriotism and what seemed to multitudes of anti-militarist teachers to be a truer ideal of citizenship. The truth is that the idea of the State is mighty and is likely in the immediate future to prevail. The very fact that England is in a sense a late convert to it may be an additional danger. In view of this there is more than a possibility of an alliance between those who fear reactionary and those who fear revolutionary forms of instruction to secure as far as possible the exclusion of the whole subject of civic instruction from the curriculum of schools and to confine them to the inculcation of eugenics and the simpler moral duties. Whatever the difficulties, it will probably be agreed that a boycott of this kind would be the worst solution of them. Against it there are two main reasons, closely concerning the children themselves, which, at the risk of unduly extending this Introduction, call for mention.

The first is that the social and political framework of their lives is a natural subject of interest to intelligent boys and girls between the ages of thirteen and sixteen, not to speak of the young men and women who will attend continuation schools.<sup>1</sup> This larger world is already part of their minds; and if there is any truth in the Socratic ideal of education as self-knowledge, it must be a fatal mistake to leave this part of the self unexplored and provide no standard whereby to estimate the relative value of its contents. We are familiar with all that can be said as to the difficulty and complexity of the subject, but this is precisely the reason why some sort of guidance

<sup>1</sup> As a teacher who had experimented in civic instruction once said to me: "Children are, as a matter of fact, immensely interested to find that there is any rhyme and reason in the arrangements of the big world outside of the circle with which they are familiar."

should be attempted. This, at any rate, was Ruskin's opinion. After lamenting that "our system of education despises politics—that is to say, the science of the relations and duties of men to each other"—he goes on to ask whether politics in this sense can be taught to the younger and more uneducated adult population, and answers: "No! but the first elements of it, all that is necessary to be known by an individual in order to his acting wisely in any station of life: the honourableness of every man who is worthily filling his appointed place in society, however humble; the proper relations of rich and poor, governor and governed; the nature of wealth and mode of its circulation; the difference between productive and unproductive labour; the relation of the products of mind and hand; the true value of the works of the higher arts and possible amount of their production; the meaning of civilization, its advantages and dangers; the meaning of the term 'refinement,' the possibilities of possessing refinement in a low station and of losing it in a high one; and, above all, the significance of almost every act of a man's daily life in its ultimate operation upon himself and others—all this might be and ought to be taught to every boy in the kingdom so completely that it should be just as impossible to introduce an absurd or licentious doctrine upon our adult population as a new version of the multiplication table."<sup>1</sup>

The second reason is that as the larger life is a natural object of interest, so to fill a place in it is a natural object of desire to young people at this stage. For this reason a great opportunity is lost if every occasion is not used to make this idea (as it may very easily be made) the centre of moral consciousness. If as moralists are now agreed all morality in origin and intention is social,

<sup>1</sup> What such instruction, seriously undertaken by a nation, can effect in strengthening national character has recently been illustrated in Japan. On ethical instruction on Japanese schools, see Baron Suyematzu's book, *The Risen Sun*, chap. iii.

and if the so-called individual virtues of temperance, self-denial, the care of the body, the use of time, talent, and opportunity have their superior claim upon the conscience because of their significance for the larger life of society and the world, the attempt (on the necessity of which all are agreed) to inculcate these things will lack its full inspiration and force if it fails to link them up with an articulate idea of all that is meant by "good citizenship."

Being as we are for these reasons committed to civic instruction in the schools of the future, we must seek our guarantees against its pitfalls in other directions than the limitation of opportunity for it. We can think of none that compares in effectiveness with the instruction of the teachers themselves in the elements of sound theory. Speaking of the great object of University teaching, Lord Curzon recently defined it as training in "intellectual citizenship." Taking it to stand for something more than intellectual fellowship, we may interpret the phrase as intended to mean citizenship founded on an intelligent conception of the nature of civic society, its relation to the individual, to other societies within and similar societies without, and finally to the great family of Humanity yet to be born, which may include them all. How much theory it is possible for universities and training colleges to give depends on the arrangement of their curricula for degrees and diplomas. It is easy to give too little, as the past has shown. It is difficult to give too much. The lectures that follow owe their origin to an attempt to set down, not the matter of civic instruction that might be imparted to pupils or even except in a very modified form to all teachers, but the principles which it seemed to us that the teachers of teachers to whom they were chiefly addressed should understand in view of the vital problems of civic organization that await us in the coming time.



## CHAPTER II

### SOCIAL THEORY IN THE MAKING

#### § 1. IS A THEORY OF SOCIETY POSSIBLE?

IN the previous lecture we discussed the meaning and relation to practice of a theory of civic society. We assumed that theory was available. But just here an objection may be raised resting on the nature of the subject, and the seeming incompatibility of the terms themselves. Social structures and the life that pulsates in them differ, it is argued, from other things, not only in serving a purpose but in embodying the idea (however obscurely conceived by the members) of a purpose or of an end not yet, but in the process of being, realized in the world. Scientific theory, on the other hand, can only deal with reality so far as it has ceased to flit in the uncertain light of the illimitable future and has been caught in the net of the actual—of an actual moreover which is measurable and calculable. The objection takes different forms according as it rests simply upon the difficulty of assigning a definite meaning to so elusive an idea as the end of civilization or (going deeper) finds a ground for this difficulty in the nature of intelligence itself and the limits of its powers. In the first of these forms it finds a distinguished exponent in Mr. H. G. Wells, whose statement of it we may take as typical. “The history of civilization,” he writes,<sup>1</sup> “is really the history of the appearance and reappearance, the tentatives and hesitations and alterations, the manifestations and reflections of a very complex, imperfect,

<sup>1</sup> See *Sociological Papers*, 1906, pp. 366-7.

and elusive idea—the Social Idea. It is that idea struggling to exist and realize itself in a world of egotisms, animalisms, and brute matter.” Of this obstructive material world it may be possible to develop a theory, but not of the Idea that manifests itself in it. “There is no such thing,” continues Mr. Wells, “as dispassionately considering what is, without considering what is intended to be”; and it is just this intention that while a legitimate subject of poetry and religion by its very nature lies beyond the grasp of theory.

To this line of reasoning we may reply by noting a distinction which the argument overlooks. It is indeed true that the “social idea” must, so far as its details are concerned, remain vague and undefined. But to assert the impossibility of detailed prevision of the structure of a more perfect form of it is one thing, to deny the possibility of any intelligible account of the reality and direction of social purpose is something quite different. The contention that civilization is the work of an idea gradually emerging with clearness out of the raw material of instinct and passion is itself presumably the result of an intellectual insight which is open to all. If it suits the genius of a Wells to explore the contents and operation of the idea by way of imaginative construction, this is no reason why those to whom such genius has been denied should not follow the humbler method of trying to trace the general outlines of the idea in actual social structure with a view to testing, in the light of what can be there discovered, the claim which it has on our allegiance. We believe that this answer is sound, and that it justifies not only such an attempt but the claim to apply the same test to the flights of imaginative genius themselves in order to distinguish what is merely Utopian from what belongs to the living tissue of the social idea. But in view of the deeper form already alluded to that the objection takes, it is necessary to go farther.

The difficulty here is not so much that of forecasting the purpose of the ages as in presenting in accurate terms

and finding adequate logical formulæ for the living movement of will and idea wherever it may be found, whether in the inner working of the individual mind or in its outer manifestation in society. The view in question is an application of the theory of the nature and limits of thought that has been made widely familiar by such writers as M. Bergson and William James. It rests on the true perception that society is an embodiment of will and purpose, and not a mechanical aggregate of independent parts. But it adds that so far is this from bringing it closer to our intellectual apprehension, it places it once and for all beyond it. We know what mind is so long as we are immersed in the process in which its life consists. On the other hand, so soon as we seek to describe or define, much more to explain, its action, we find it has escaped us as the living air escapes the grasp of the hand. This is the necessary consequence of the nature of logical thought, which can operate only so far as it can abstract from its object elements which are materializable and measurable. In the case of life and mind there are no such elements. It is only by a process of falsification of their real nature that they can be submitted to philosophical analysis. It is thus that the scientific character claimed for works on psychology and sociology is purchased at the expense of the mutilation of the object. Theory "murders to dissect," and we are driven to the choice between a theory which is not the theory of the living thing but of a dead and desiccated image of it, and a living thing which is not the legitimate subject of theory.

To state fully the reasons why we must reject the philosophy of knowledge on which this argument is founded would carry us into logical discussion which here would clearly be out of place. It must be sufficient to point out the fallacy involved in any theory which treats thought, as this seems to do, as merely analytic. Thought doubtless means analysis and abstraction whereby particular aspects of the concrete reality are taken in isolation from other aspects. But thought contains no less a movement of



synthesis whereby the elements separated by analysis are recombined, and the illumination the process has brought as to the nature of the part is reflected on the whole to which it belongs. Mutilation there may indeed be. To think is to take great risks. But the mutilation begins, not with the act of selection and abstraction, but with the attempt to take the selected aspect as the whole and to interpret the concrete thing in terms of what is at best but a part of it. Such a falsification takes place in the present instance when in thinking about thought itself, we interpret it as consisting merely in the association of ideas or as a merely analytic and abstractive process. Taken with the complementary process of synthesis and reinterpretation, so far from murdering, thought is the giver of life to all that it touches.<sup>1</sup> By means of it shoots of inner connection and meaning begin to dart here and there among its tissues; what was opaque becomes transparent; what was dead and meaningless becomes instinct with meaning. Social theory, indeed, differs from physical in that, as we shall see more fully later, it deals with an entity the principle of whose being is no external force holding parts otherwise antagonistic to one another together, but participation in a purpose which is of the essence of each. But so far is this from withdrawing it farther from our comprehension, that it brings it closer to it, seeing that we may with justice claim that we understand far better what we mean by the purposeful action of a mind than by the unintelligent interaction of material things. If we grant, then, as we do, the assumption of the writers we are criticizing, that civilization is the action of an idea, and if our criticism of their view of the nature of theory is sound, instead of being something remote from our intelligence, civilized society is just

<sup>1</sup> What Novalis says of philosophy, "Philosophiren ist dephlegmatisiren, vivificiren," is true of thinking in general. See on the whole subject Nettleship's Essay on "The Future of Theory," *Philosophical Lectures and Remains*, where this aphorism is quoted.

that of all things in the world without us which we are most fitted to understand, inasmuch as it reflects in a larger scale what we know most intimately of ourselves on the smaller scale of our individual lives.

## § 2. METHODS AND THEORIES.

Assuming, then, the legitimacy of theory, we may begin by noting one or two of the methods in which theorists have approached the subject. How rich the material even of the last half-century here is may be gathered from such a book as Mr. Ernest Barker's brilliant sketch of *Political Thought from Spencer to our own Day*. Our object is not a review of theories in the form given them by individual thinkers, but the selection of those whose errors may be of assistance to us in our task by enabling us to realize the conditions that true theory must satisfy.

If we look at the course of modern thought as a whole, it is not difficult to see that it presents the appearance of having been inspired and dominated from time to time by certain leading conceptions which form a kind of dynastic succession corresponding to the rise of the chief departments of science. In this way, corresponding to the great development of physical science that took place in the eighteenth and early nineteenth century, we have the dominance of the tendency to regard everything from the atom to the mind of man as a mechanical structure, put together out of relatively independent parts. The rise of biology into prominence in the middle of the nineteenth century, if it did not introduce, emphasized the conception of organic development which at once began to revolutionize thought in every department—to be succeeded in turn by a counter-revolution in favour of a treatment of cosmic problems from a point of view which, by calling in the aid of the comparatively new science of psychology, sought to do more justice to the inner side of the process of evolution. If at the present moment there is a revived interest in "philosophy,"

this is not to be regarded as a revival of the claim to explain natural phenomena by an appeal to metaphysical entities, but as the result of a wholesome suspicion of such merely dynastic claims and a recognition of the essential relativity of the points of view represented by each of them.

While some studies, mathematics for instance, and perhaps astronomy, are comparatively unaffected by these variations of intellectual atmosphere, others have shown themselves singularly sensitive to them. Among these has to be reckoned the theory of society which almost in living memory may be said to have passed through a physical, a biological, and a psychological phase, adapting itself by a species of mimicry to the scientific environment of the time.

### § 3. PHYSICS AND POLITICS.

If we look at social life unreflectingly as it goes on about us, we are apt to see in it the activities of countless separate persons absorbed for the most part in their own private concerns, but entering into association, now at this point, now at that, as their interests seem temporarily to require it. Over this solid world of private concerns and voluntary association, indeed, there is stretched a network of law and government representing the interest of an entity known as the *res publica* or common weal, but as it seems containing nothing substantial enough to compare with the *res privatae* of individuals. It has of course its uses in keeping order among the separate units and regulating their traffic with one another, but it contributes nothing material to their well-being, and images rather the weakness than the strength of individual human nature.<sup>1</sup>

It is from some such point of view that we must seek to understand the theory which found the origin of the social union in a bargain or contract between separate

<sup>1</sup> "Society," said Paine, "is produced by our wants and Government by our wickedness" (*Common Sense, init.*).



and independent units, whereby, in return for benefits accruing from a settled social order, individuals resigned a certain part of the liberties that belonged to them in their natural state and constituted their natural rights. The great representatives of the theory differed in the degree of mutual repulsion they ascribed to the units and in the amount of the independence which each renounced in entering the civic state. But they were at one in treating the organized structure typified by law and government as essentially of the nature of a balance or compromise between conflicting forces in human nature.

Nineteenth-century writers pride themselves on having got beyond the fallacies of the "social contract," but how inevitably any atomistic theory of society allies itself with this conception is seen in the readiness with which writers like Herbert Spencer, in order to vindicate the natural right of the citizen to ignore the State, revert to the hypothesis of "an agreement tacitly entered into between the State and its members." This relapse is doubtless lamentable enough. "Natural rights in a social organism," it has been said, "are as much out of place as a vacuum in a solid." But it witnesses, at any rate, to the consciousness not yet overlaid by the "scientific" method, which Spencer otherwise is fain to follow, that the real problem of civic theory is not the *de facto* existence of the civic order, but the foundation of its claim to the loyalty of individual citizens.

Detailed criticism of the social contract theory is not our object, but before we pass from it it is important to realize wherein precisely its failure consists. It is not that, as in Hobbes, it endows the civic structure with the attributes of will. In this, on the contrary, we must see an anticipation of the line which all sound theory is bound to follow. Nor is it that it is unhistorical in conceiving of what is a slow process of unconscious growth as a single conscious act.<sup>1</sup> It may very well be doubted

<sup>1</sup> Carlyle disposes of Rousseau with the gibe that unfortunately he omitted to tell us the date of the social contract.

whether any of the great writers who are identified with the theory held it in this form. In all of them it was an "idea in the form of history." With all of them it was a profound conviction that sovereignty wherever it rested, whether in an individual, in an assembly, or in the general consciousness of the community, derived its authority, not from some external source or from the mere weight of prescription, but from the reasonable though not necessarily reasoned consent of the citizens. The error lay, not in the "form of history," but in the "idea" whereby the civic order is conceived of as in its essence a compromise between the freedom and independence to which each has a natural right, and the conditions imposed by the accidental circumstance of his being thrown together with other similarly endowed and similarly claimant individuals. Civic society comes before us therefore as that in spite of which rather than that by means of which individuality is to be realized, with the result that the acceptance of its yoke can never in the end be more than a matter of prudence, and that any coercive power which it possesses must rest in the last resort, not on any moral claim, but on the force with which it can arm itself. The facts, of course, proved too strong for the greatest of the exponents of the theory. In a well-known passage in the *Leviathan*, Hobbes is ready to realize that so far from the social order constituting a limit to man's power, it is that without which his life on earth must be "solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and short." But to admit this is to admit that civic loyalty rests on quite other foundations than fear of one's fellows. On such a view *homo homini deus* is far nearer the truth than *homo homini lupus*. Fear of the brutish in himself and others may be the beginning of social wisdom, but love of the human must be the end. It is a similar logic that finds expression in Rousseau's celebrated contrast between mere natural liberty, and the civic freedom that man gains by exchange for it, and in his conception of the "general will" which, imperfectly as he realized

it himself, was in reality the starting-point for a wholly different view of the relation of society to the individual. Already in such a conception the space that separates will from will is bridged, and individuals are seen to cohere in virtue of their power to realize their common membership in a kingdom of spiritual ends; or, to put it in a still better way, they are only truly differentiated and individualized in so far as they make the common life their own in the active discharge of a social function. But this conception of society as an organism of will and intelligence was still in the future and required for its philosophical vindication an entirely different psychology from that which had served as the basis of eighteenth-century theory.

#### § 4. BIOLOGY AND POLITICS.

##### (a) THE SOCIAL ORGANISM.

Though the mechanical theory of society lingered on far into the nineteenth century, it was bound to be profoundly modified by the biological conceptions which were the dominating influence of the time. It had already been announced that constitutions, i.e. the general forms of civic society, are not made, but grow. On the question of the reason and the manner of their origin and growth the general laws of evolution in the natural world could not fail to throw light. So it appeared to thinkers who, like Herbert Spencer, long before the publication of the *Origin of Species*, had conceived of the social order *sub specie evolutionis* as an organism among other organisms. Properly interpreted and taken in connection with the mental background of social life, this idea, as Plato and St. Paul had already seen, is perhaps the most illuminating that theory has brought to the study of politics.<sup>1</sup> Taken

<sup>1</sup> "This great comparison of the relation between human beings in society to that between the parts of a living body was introduced into moral thought by Plato, and has been perhaps the most fruitful of all moral ideas."—B. Bosanquet's *Essays and Addresses*, p. 151.



by itself, however, the conception of the individual society as an organism clearly leads nowhere. There can be no analogy between an organism, in which control resides in the central brain, and society, where this control is exercised through the will of individuals. Not only does the "organism" break up into separate centres of consciousness, but these may, constantly do, and in the end, according to Spencer himself, must set themselves in opposition to the structure within which they have been nourished. Hence so far from being a consistent conception, the idea of a "social organism" comes to look more like a contradiction in terms. If biology in its experiments with social theory had ended here, we should merely have to thank it for bringing us back after an excursion through confusing metaphors to the mechanical point of view. True the independent individual is now conceived of as coming at the end instead of at the beginning, as being the product and not the starting-point of social development. But the individuality which is evolved is rooted in the possession by each of a separate mind and will, with purposes of its own, to be realized in an area into which law and government and the unified whole they represent are without right of entry. Unless it can be shown that just in virtue of this possession there is the possibility of a new form of union based on the individual's loyalty to the civic structure as the guarantee of the actuality of all he most cares for, the whole conception of organism turns to a snare. But it was just such a conception that the individualistic psychology enlisted as a partner in this biological enterprise failed to provide. It was the manifest inadequacy of biological theory when applied in this form to the explanation of the relation of members within a particular society that led to an altogether different conception of social coherence as the result of the external pressure of societies as units in the struggle for existence on one another.

## (b) DARWINISM AND POLITICS.

As the idea of the social organism is invoked in correction of the individualism of earlier theory, the idea of natural selection is called in to take the place of the social contract. The coherence of early society, the formation and perpetuation of institutions that represent the common interest, are the result, not of conscious agreement, but of the unconscious pressure of the environment. In due time it becomes necessary, if the cohesion is going to be preserved, that the customs which hold civic organization, so to speak, in solution should be precipitated into legal arrangements. It was because the law-observing spirit was a favourable variation in the struggle for existence that the State arose. "In the conflict between groups," says Bagehot, one of the leaders in this method of thought, "the first thing to acquire is the legal fibre; a polity first—what sort of polity is immaterial; a law first—what kind of law is secondary; a person or set of persons to pay deference to—though who he is or they are by comparison scarcely signifies. The slightest system of legal development, the least indication of a military bond is then enough to turn the scale. The compact tribe wins. Civilization begins because the beginning of civilization is a military advantage."<sup>1</sup>

What is true at the outset holds in the sequel. It is a mistake to interpret the struggle for existence as it holds of human society as primarily a struggle between individuals. The struggle is primarily between political societies, only secondarily between individuals, classes, or subordinate societies. For the sake of the cohesion and strength of the State as a whole it is necessary to limit, perhaps altogether to supersede the individual. So far from individualism being the natural corollary of the

<sup>1</sup> *Physics and Politics* (Popular Science Series), p. 52, condensed. Needless to say there is far more than misplaced biology in Bagehot's political theory.

application of Darwinism to politics, at least one form of socialism has owed its acceptance to the influence of "militarism" in the mind of the ruling class.<sup>1</sup>

In criticizing this view it is important to keep clearly in view the precise nature of our problem and the precise point at which this method of solution breaks down. Society is an animate being, and is subject to the laws of life.<sup>2</sup> To some degree, though it is difficult enough to say to what precise degree, we must allow the value of the application of biological law to the life of society in so far as it is controlled by merely instinctive tendencies. It does not seem a fatal objection to such a point of view that natural selection is unable to explain the growth of sympathy together with the whole system of laws and institutions which have for their object the preservation of the weak. So long as these mean merely the expenditure of a fraction of the corporate income in the gratification of humane impulses, and not the propagation of degenerate stocks, their survival value in maintaining a sense of corporate unity may far outweigh the minute handicap they impose. The point at which the theory fails is in the twofold standard of ethical valuation that it sets up. Seeking to avoid the dualism of an ethical and a cosmic order appealing to separate principles, it only succeeds in reasserting it in a more paradoxical form. The society as a unit lives in a world of which the supreme law is to get and to hold. Our admiration for it is to be in proportion to its power as a fighting organism: its wealth, its arms, its territory and fortresses. But for the parts there is to be another law. They live in another,

<sup>1</sup> The influence of pseudo-Darwinism in Germany is traced in J. H. Muirhead's *German Philosophy in Relation to the War*. But it is not only in Germany that State Socialism has found its advocates, as in conformity with the teaching of biology. Among English writers Karl Pearson has supported it on the ground of its survival value in an essay in *The Chances of Death*.

<sup>2</sup> See J. E. Urwick's *Introduction to a Philosophy of Social Progress*, chap. i.



i.e. a moral, order in which admiration is claimed for none of these things, but for the characters and actions which treat them as dross in comparison with the good of the whole. Self-denial, culture of the intelligence and will, religion, these are the things that matter for the State. But the State itself stands primarily for none of these things, but for its own self-interest. It is impossible in view of present events to deny the practicability of the attempt to live up to such a contradictory combination of standards.<sup>1</sup> What we can say is, in the first place, that it is impossible to maintain it in practice. The morals that are operative in politics must inevitably affect internal standards. On the other hand, internal standards will inevitably affect the external and force unwilling condemnation of the political acts which they countenance. Any one who has followed the cross-currents of opinion that swirl beneath the main stream of patriotic sentiment in Germany at the present time will be reminded of many examples of this inner instability. In the second place it is impossible to justify the attempt in theory. The more the contradiction is realized the more the theorist must find himself forced to make a choice between a principle which assimilates the moral to the political standard, and one that assimilates the political to the moral. In the former case he will be led to recognize that the claim of the State is not one that can be urged on human nature as it is in reality constituted, as one that it can accept with whole-hearted loyalty. The only guarantee of patriotism or even common justice and social good faith is to be found either in unreasoning sentiment or in the constraint of an irresistible power. With such a result it is difficult to see what advance we have made on the individualism of the mechanical view of the structure and cohesive power of society. In the latter case we have given up the struggle for existence as the all-sufficient ground of a satisfactory social theory.

<sup>1</sup> For an excellent statement of this contradiction see L. T. Hobhouse's *Social Evolution and Political Theory*, p. 17.

## § 5. SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY.

In all this it was a great advance when, under the influence of the new psychology, attention came to be directed to the inner side of the process whereby, albeit under the external influence of the struggle for life, social solidarity was achieved. Society, it was realized, is a union of minds, its solidarity a solidarity of feeling and belief. We can understand<sup>1</sup> how a local variation in a physical organism may act as a character of the whole, but there is more to be considered in the case of a society. Here, the favourable variation is some new way of thinking or acting. It must originate in an individual mind, and before it can become a social possession it must be shared by the community as a whole. True the contract theory had recognized that society was a union of mind and purpose, but mind was conceived, in eighteenth-century fashion, as working with the same clearness of aim as the philosopher in his study. Salutary beliefs and habits of action had, therefore, to be created either by fear or imposture. It marked therefore an epoch in social theory when the laws of the action of the subconscious, particularly the "Laws of Imitation," came to be applied in the seventies and eighties by the great psychologist Tarde to social theory. At the present moment it is difficult to exaggerate the importance of the contribution to the understanding of the actual working of the social mind that we owe to "social psychology," whether it is approached from the side of imitation, as by its founder, or of instinct by such writers as Dr. MacDougall, whether it is used to throw light on the life of early societies by Dürkheim and Lévy Bruhl or in the politics of the present day by Graham Wallas. Besides giving depth, colour,

<sup>1</sup> Or, again, can we *not*? "Quelle est la nature intime de cette suggestion de cellule à cellule cérébrale qui constitue la vie mentale?" asks Tarde, and answers, "Nous n'en savons rien." He denies similarly any knowledge of social suggestion, but he goes on to explain it all the same in terms of mind.

and reality to the study of politics, it has brought home the continuity of social consciousness, enabling us to feel in ourselves the movements of ancient tribal, even herd instincts. Above all it has broadened our conception of the elements that any true social ideal must find room for if it is adequately to reflect the fullness of human life.<sup>1</sup> But these brilliant achievements ought not to blind us to the inadequacy of the method it has in the main pursued to supply an answer to what, as we have seen, is the central problem of civic theory. Psychology is a science of the actual. Like the other special sciences, it concerns itself with questions of fact and of origin. But the origin of forms of conscious experience is one thing, their status and value in the life of mind as a whole is another. In the case of "individual psychology," which has grown up within an atmosphere of general philosophy, the temptation to overlook the difference is minimized by the general recognition of its "abstractness" and by the distinction, which is by this time a commonplace, between the psychological and the ethical treatment of the contents of mind. Social psychology, on the other hand, may be said to have had an independent origin, and even to have inherited from its founders an attitude of hostility to philosophy in general. Be this as it may, it has as a whole shown a singular indifference to questions of meaning and validity, which makes it often difficult to avoid the impression that so far as political theory is concerned it is an elaborate begging of the question.<sup>2</sup>

The importance of the point may justify an illustration from a classical passage in social psychology. In his

<sup>1</sup> See W. James's eloquent appeal on behalf of the instincts, *Principles of Psychology*, ii. 441.

<sup>2</sup> We are sometimes inclined to say of it as a whole what Mr. Ernest Barker says of one of its most brilliant exponents, that it "does a great deal of packing for a journey on which it never starts." The "intellectualists" (against whose methods it protests) may not do enough packing, but at any rate they do travel into and explore the State.



chapter "Qu'est ce qu'une Société" in *Les Lois de l'Imitation*, Tarde sets aside the theory that society rests on mutual services. The theory forgets, he tells us, that services rest on laws, customs having the force of laws, procedures, politenesses, and that "society is much more a mutual determination of engagements or agreements, of rights and duties, than a mutual service." A view like this might pass, although rights which do not rest on the recognition of individuals as at least possible contributors to the common welfare might remind us of the abstractions of the "contract" philosophy. It recognizes at least that society rests in acknowledgment of rights. But when we inquire into the nature and origin of rights—the rights, for instance, which we teach the peasant and the labourer that he possesses as a citizen—it is disquieting to be told that "right is here no more than a consequence and a form of the tendency of man to imitation," and to have society itself finally defined as "an organization of imitations."<sup>1</sup>

A further consequence of the emphasis which this method inevitably lays on the unconscious and instinctive is the encouragement it is apt to give to the attitude of mind which regards the State with suspicion on the ground of the obstruction it may offer to the free development of the instinctive tendencies of its parts. True the parts are conceived of as themselves societies, and the denial of the unitariness of the State does not involve the dissolution of society, but it is just here that its logic is apt to fail. As societies, the parts cannot afford to dispense with organization, and organization in a modern community means rational adaptation to the common aim. It is difficult to see with what logic you can wage war against the control of a unitary purpose in the wider field of the State, while you admit it in the narrower of the group or the guild. If there is one lesson which social psychology teaches more than another, it is that society is all of one piece. If you look for the principle of progress in the

<sup>1</sup> Op. cit. 5th ed. p. 76.

ebullitions of instinct or the vagaries of "intuition" instead of in the sense of what is logically implied in the "social idea," there is nothing to stand between you and the old individualism from which the whole modern movement of thought is an effort to escape. Social Psychology is itself responsible for the conception of "Social Logic," and in an interesting passage in the chapter already quoted Tarde speaks of a social type or "particular civilization" as "a veritable system" and comparable to "a more or less coherent theory." If, as with one powerful school of social psychologists, the logic which leads to the kind of "collective representations" of which social consciousness consists is of a different kind from the logic of the organizing reason as we know it in ordinary thinking, we are again on the inclined plane of irrationalism and on the highway to political reaction. If, on the other hand, we take the phrase to mean the working of the same reason, albeit in unconscious form, in all forms of society, we have a central light for all our seeing, but we have passed beyond social psychology. It is this latter view which we have now to consider.

## CHAPTER III

### WILL IN THE INDIVIDUAL

#### § 1. THE PROBLEM MORE PRECISELY STATED:

THE discussion in the last lecture has, we hope, made clear the general nature of the question with which in a philosophy of Civic Society we have to do. The study of the natural origin of society and of the processes in the individual mind by which social solidarity is achieved is of the greatest value in understanding the fact that is before us. But Civic Society is more than a fact. As the word "citizenship" implies, it represents a moral claim upon the allegiance of its members, and it is the ground or rationale of this claim that constitutes our main problem. It is possible that the solution of the problem is to be found in the denial of the distinction between fact and claim—the merging of the moral in the natural; but the distinction, it will be acknowledged, is a deeply rooted one—as deeply rooted as that between the mere fact of believing and the truth of our beliefs. To ignore it from the first, as is done by some prominent biological and psychological theories, is to beg the whole question.

This being understood, we are prepared to formulate our problem more precisely. It is one of the moral authority of the *πόλις* or *civitas*. But seeing that by "authority" we mean the control of mind and will by what is itself mind and will, and by "moral authority" a control which rests, not upon mere power of enforcement by external means, but upon the appeal to a superior element in our own nature, which freely responds to it,



as though to a suggestion coming from itself—in order to prove that Civic Society possesses a moral claim to our allegiance, we have to show two things. In the first place, from the point of view of origin and existence, we have to show, not only that it has its being in the mind and will of individuals, but that it stands for elements which may be described as their own better mind and will; secondly, from the point of view of end, that its aim, once it has originated, is the development of this better mind. And we may begin by noting that neither of these propositions is self-evident. From the point of view of origin there seems little to be said for a theory which attributes civic structure to will in any ordinary sense of the word. If there is one thing that would seem plainer than another in the teaching of sociology, it is that human, like animal, society is a natural growth springing in the first instance from the instinct of co-operation for the supply of the necessities of life, welded together by the pressure of a hostile environment and by common beliefs, as little chosen or intended by the members as the colour of their skins. At a certain stage of development will appears; but it is the will of the powerful few overbearing that of the many weak and imposing on them a form of life which they accept as a *fait accompli*, not as a *fait voulu*. Similarly if we turn from the selfishness and violence in which institutions as we know them had their origin to the forces by which they are maintained we shall find that these resemble far more the inertia of habit than anything that can be described as the active co-operation of the will. "What is it?" asks T. H. Green, "but an external necessity which he no more lays on himself than he does the weight of the atmosphere or the pressure of summer heat and winter frosts that compels the ordinary citizen to pay rates and taxes, to serve in the army, to abstain from walking over the squire's fields, snaring his hares or fishing in preserved streams, to paying rent, to respect those artificial rights of property which only the possessors of them have any obvious interest in

maintaining, or even (if he is one of the 'proletariat') to keep his hands off the superfluous wealth of his neighbour when he has none of his own to lose?"<sup>1</sup> And again, what is true of the origin and maintenance is true of what is called the progress of society. This would appear to be far more the result of instinctive reaction against conditions that press uncomfortably upon some of its organs, and far more like the unconscious adjustment of a sleeping animal than the progressive accomplishment of any predetermined aim in man. In an age like our own of conscious reform, things might seem to be different and conscious purpose to have superseded instinct and accident, but a closer study of the process and results of reform tends to dissipate this impression. Will and rational intention have certainly here supervened, but it is the will of a few in conflict with the weight of unreasoning custom, tradition, or vested interest. Against this it makes its way by an appeal to forces which only in the smallest degree have anything to do with logic and intelligent conviction. Moreover, when, firstly through the energy and ability of the initiators and other accidental circumstances, change takes place, it is usually something entirely different from anything that its originators had in mind. Though they have *willed* it, it fails to express their will.

Equally out of touch with fact would seem to be the suggestion that social institutions as we know them are an effective training ground of will and character in the sense of the development of the power to rise above private or particular interests. It is granted, of course, that if a family, an industrial concern, or a State is to cohere, it must be in virtue of the power of its members to rise above mere individual interest. So far as this is the case we may claim for the various forms of society

<sup>1</sup> *Lectures on Political Obligation*. Green had in view the state of matters that prevailed in England in the sixties and seventies of last century. How much more it would have held of the twenties and thirties we may see from the picture that the Hammonds draw in the chapter on "Justice" in *The Town Labourer* (1917).

that they are a training in unselfishness. But there is such a thing as arrested development, and it hardly needs to be said that such forms of social union as family and business far more frequently represent stages of arrest than stages of progress. At the outset of political philosophy their defects as a training ground of social character attracted the attention of Plato, who saw no other remedy for them than the destruction of the family and the exclusion of the industrial classes from any real civic responsibility. Following his example, radical social reformers have always regarded them with suspicion as strongholds of the spirit of selfishness and exclusion.<sup>1</sup> True, they have usually assumed that the civic spirit, to promote which they have been ready to sacrifice the family and competitive industry, is identical with the spirit of morality, but we have had recent experience of how the *egoisme à deux* or *à plusieurs* of the family or industry may spread to the civic whole and become a source of moral corruption. It is not too much to say that the most marked effect of the great war upon social theory is the profound distrust of the State as merely the organ of a wider and more deeply rooted form of selfishness.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The following extract from the First Annual Report of the recently appointed Committee of the Privy Council for Scientific and Industrial Research illustrates the situation in the industrial world of to-day: "Organization can only be fought by counter-organization, and so long as the Englishman treats his business house as his business castle, adding to its original plan here and there as necessity or inclination directs, with his hand against the hand of every other baron in his trade, and no personal interest in the foreign politics of his industry as a whole, it will be as impossible for the State to save him, whether by research or other means, as it would have been for King Stephen to conduct a campaign abroad."

<sup>2</sup> This point of view has been stated with great force by Mr. Bertrand Russell in his recently published book on the *Principles of Social Reconstruction*. His thesis is that institutions like the family, education, the State, whatever their origin, by their very nature as institutions are an obstacle to the exercise of the higher creative faculties, and therefore to progress.



In view of all this, it seems clear that for anything pretending to be a philosophy of society, the foundations must be laid in a philosophy of the will, not merely as the name of a class of events that happen in the world, but as one of the modes in which a being whose life is controlled and moulded by the idea of a better and a worse expresses itself.

If, in taking as our starting-point mind writ small in the individual, we seem to be reversing Plato's method to seek for the clue to the individual in the larger letters of the community, we have to remember, not only that, if the letters are smaller, they are nearer to us, but that our problem is the reverse of his. Ancient social theory could start from the acknowledged reality of the civic mind. Its problem was to find its counterpart in the soul of the individual. Modern theory, on the other hand, starts from the reality of mind and conscience in the individual. Its problem is the relation in which social structure stands to them.

## § 2. INSTINCT AND WILL.

It is unnecessary, perhaps, after what has been already said, to dwell upon the light which has been thrown on the nature of the will by the recognition of the place of instinct in human life. There are, however, two points of fundamental importance for our subject which are apt to be obscured by current treatments of the instincts in detail. No one has done more to throw light on their general nature than William James in his well-known chapter in the *Principles of Psychology*. But in the enumeration of them which he gives we are apt to lose sight of the wood among the trees. On the other hand, a division such as that with which Mr. Russell starts in his *Principles of Social Reconstruction* into the creative and the possessive as the sheep and the goats,<sup>1</sup> of our

<sup>1</sup> Op. cit. p. 22: "Impulses may be divided into those that make for life and those that make for death." Doctrines of original sin always have been and always will be barren for social reconstruction.

active impulses is equally misleading if it obscures the complexity and interrelatedness of all of them. Under which head should we class, for instance, the maternal instinct or the instinct of emulation. Every impulse may be the servant of good or the servant of evil, according to the place assigned to it in the system of our desires. We may agree with Plato, and with Mr. Russell after him, that the creative instinct goes deeper, and is more distinctively human than any other. But the problem of social life is to be solved, not by the elimination, or the limitation from without, of the others, but by assigning them the place in human life in which they will best contribute to its creative work. Dr. McDougall's attempt to mark out certain of the instincts as primary, others as secondary and tertiary compounds of them, is conceived on truer lines. But, as he works it out, the exaggerated emphasis on the feeling for self in the narrower sense of the word creates a difficulty which we venture to think he fails subsequently to overcome, and which would seem to be fatal to the claims of such a psychology to furnish a satisfactory basis of social theory.

In contrast to these ways of regarding the instincts, we are fain to revert to a view as old as Aristotle and to define instinct as the meeting-point of body and mind or soul—the "first realization," as Aristotle would have called it, of an organized body which has the possibility of consciousness, or, as we might say, which operates in a medium of consciousness. We shall thus be ready to see in it the reflexion at once of the complexity of the nervous system ("no other mammal, not even the monkey, shows so large an array" <sup>1</sup>) and of its unity of purpose: the instincts are all phases or forms of the one fundamental impulse, not merely to self-preservation (*in suo esse perseverare*) but to self-affirmation (*suum esse asseverare*). On the one hand they point backward to the rich organization which Nature, working unconsciously, has achieved in the system of reflex actions we call our bodies; on the

<sup>1</sup> William James, loc. cit.

other they point forward, to a form of life as yet unachieved, in which they will be reorganized and reintegrated so as to reflect a central purpose in which their full meaning will first manifest itself.

This brings us to the second point. The doctrine of the unity of instinct, of which perhaps M. Bergson is the most distinguished exponent at the present time, has been part of a general movement of reaction against the view which found the source of organization in conscious intelligence dealing with passions wholly irrational in themselves. But the lesson, which the discovery or the rediscovery of unity of plan and purpose in the instinctive elements of human nature has to teach, is misread if it be interpreted, as it is by many Bergsonians, to mean a denial of the rights of thought and reason as the unifying and organizing principle of human life. It is the attempt to readjust the balance between "intellectualism" and anti-intellectualism that gives particular value to Mr. Graham Wallas's chapter on "Instinct" in the *Great Society*. The writer there criticizes Dr. McDougall's distinction between instinct and thought, and claims that "we are born with a tendency, under appropriate conditions, to think which is as original and independent as our tendency, under appropriate conditions, to run away." But, while agreeing that there is continuity between instinct and intelligence, we must deny that justice is done to the nature of this continuity by simply describing thought as an instinct. It is quite true that we do not set thought going by a conscious effort. Thought is as "natural" to man as eating. But it is to overlook an essential distinction in mental activities (just the distinction that the recognition of instinct has brought to light) to identify the mode in which the impulse of a mere instinct and the impulse to think achieves its purpose. To take Mr. Wallas's own instance: to run away out of pure fright is one thing, to run away in order to fight again another day is something quite different. In the one case the control of the actions involved is brought about



by an inherited organization of sensory and motor elements ; in the other, while this inheritance is presupposed, it is controlled by a conscious idea capable of altering the whole course of the action. The writer is on safer ground when he emphasizes the distinction between the action of pure instinct in insect life which seems to operate independently of experience and the process by which it is constantly moulded and overlaid by association and memory in the mammals, and when he takes the latter as the type of its place in human life. But here also it is important for our purpose to realize the distinction between them. We are right in distrusting all attempts to draw a hard-and-fast line between the action of intelligence working on a basis of experience in the higher animals and in lower human races. But it is a mistake to interpret the difference, as biological writers are apt to do, as merely one of the complexity of the ends attained. At a certain time there is what Mr. Wallas calls a "quantitative which amounts to a qualitative distinction." However much the intelligence of the higher animals approximates to that of man in the use of memory and association, man has the advantage, co-ordinated with the use of language, first of being able to analyse a situation, distinguishing means from end, and organizing action for the attainment of a purpose, and secondly of distinguishing between the relative value of purposes and the resulting organizations. The consequence is that as the lower animals depend on the automatic action of association for the control of their lives by experience, so they depend on the mechanical action of natural selection for progress. In contrast to this, man has the power of interpreting the results of experience and embodying them in a rule or tradition. In Kant's language, while the animals are guided by law, man is guided by the idea of law. It is true the law may work automatically, if we choose to say so instinctively, as in habit and custom. But the idea is there, and may be made an object of reflective thought. To us it seems a short step from the one to the other, and if again we

like to say so, it is a step which is instinctively made. But in human history it has taken a long time to make it, and it is only being made at the present moment under exceptional stimulus by any large part of the human race. When it is made the result is twofold. On the one hand it appears as a loss. The instinctive balance of impulses, the natural aplomb of unreflective life, which Aristotle called "natural virtue," is lost or remains only like a memory of innocence. On the other hand, it is a gain. It means that the way is open for progress towards an ideal of perfection which stands to the life of instinct as a picture to the kaleidoscopic grouping that might contain its general form and tones. If the unconscious is alone complete, the self-conscious can alone *seek* completeness.

### § 3. HABIT.

Instinct in the widest sense is the impulse to react upon stimulus in a purposive way in consequence of an inherited disposition of the body-mind<sup>1</sup> system. It has been called organic memory. Habit also in the widest sense is such a disposition as formed in the individual in virtue merely of repetition<sup>2</sup>—acquired memory we might call it. It is this feature which first attracts notice in it. While, in the case of instinct, attention is arrested by the weird purposiveness of its action, what strikes us first in habit is the often equally weird lapse from purposeful direction. This explains why some philosophers, while ready to see in instinct the promise and potency of human intelligence, have entertained so inveterate a suspicion of habit as the enemy of the alertness and responsiveness that are characteristic of purposeful<sup>3</sup> direction. Instinct keeps alive,

<sup>1</sup> We badly want a term for short of "psycho-physical organism." We use "body-mind" as the best that strikes us.

<sup>2</sup> "The tendency for all mental processes to be facilitated by repetition" (McDougall).

<sup>3</sup> It would be well if writers could agree to use "purposeful" in the sense of conscious direction in contrast to the merely "purposive" action of instinct or habit.

generates feeling, breaks up the crust of use and wont ; habit puts consciousness to sleep, dulls feeling, reproduces mechanism on the plane of life. By laying down paths of least resistance it tends to perpetuate itself and enlist the powers of inertia on its side. It was in view of this aspect of it that Socrates defined all excellence in terms of the knowledge which is its opposite, that Fichte maintained that to form a habit was to fail, that Shelley described its sister custom as

" The queen of slaves,  
The hoodwinked angel of the blind and dead,"

and that a class of writers at the present day wage unceasing war upon it.<sup>1</sup>

And if this were all their suspicions would be well deserved. But this is only one, and the superficial side of habit. To understand its significance for social life, the main thing here is to realize the other.

In the first place we have to note the strand of habit that even in the life of the lower animals is woven into it from the first. The thrush sings with the morning by instinct, he sings from a particular tree and branch by habit ; the nightingale mates by instinct, he returns from his winter wanderings to find the same lady-love from habit. Looked at from the side of habit, this means that while instinct provides the stream, habit provides the bed in which its purposiveness flows. Instead of thinking of habits as parts of life that have worked loose from the general purposes of organic life and function in a vacuum of their own making,<sup>2</sup> we must think of them rather as the force that gives stability and organic value to the impulsive and on the whole capricious action of instinct, economizing its energy and keeping it in the

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Bernard Shaw speaks of it as the "perambulator" of human life, a provision for its second infancy.

<sup>2</sup> Asked in court what her husband's habits were, an affectionate wife indignantly repudiated the idea that he had any.



lines on which experience, individual and racial, has set its mark of approval.

In the second place it is important to note that what is true of habit at the level of animal instinct and its unprogressive round is true of progressive life in man. To conceive of habit as a "groove" and as a mere loss of intelligent direction is to overlook the fact that in the vast majority of acquired dispositions it means a facilitation and an economy of effort that makes progress possible. When this is taken into account, so far from being an obstacle to excellence, physical, moral, or intellectual, habit, by creating a mechanism for the control of the wayward and unstable elements in human life, is the prime condition of it. In the case of action this aspect of habit has been familiar since Aristotle defined virtue itself as a habit. The application to feeling is recent. In an eloquent passage William James claims the benumbing effect of habit "as the great fly-wheel of society that keeps us all within the bounds of ordinance and saves the children of fortune from the envious uprisings of the poor."<sup>1</sup> But it is just this conservative function against which its critics rebel. "Better for society if the great fly-wheel were removed and its work converted from a soulless mechanism to a joyous service of the spirit." The same writer is on surer ground when he dwells upon the economy of emotion which repetition and familiarity effect in the higher walks of life. "Where," he asks, "would the general, the surgeon, the presiding chairman be if their nerve current kept running into their viscera instead of keeping up amid their convolutions?" The initial thrill of excitement has doubtless gone, and a man may think he has lost and is becoming stale. In reality, as Höffding puts it, "What he has lost in rapture he has gained in inward growth."<sup>2</sup>

Going along with this is a third point which concerns us here even more closely. We are apt to think of habits when attention is directed to them, not only in a dyslogistic

<sup>1</sup> Op. cit. i. 121.

<sup>2</sup> Quoted *ibid.*

sense as obstructions to progress, but in isolation from one another. If what has just been said of their relation to instinct and interest is true, we may expect to find in them, on the contrary, the organic parts of a larger whole which includes and depends upon them. This is what we actually find in life. There are big and little habits. The habit of putting things in drawers or of answering letters the same day is part of a larger habit of tidiness, and tidiness is part of a larger habit of making the best of one's time or of enabling other people to make the best of theirs. It is true that, as we have said, these habits may get loose from the general texture of life as when in an exacting housekeeper tidiness is taken as an end in itself and becomes the demon instead of the kindly genius of the place. This, however, is not a defect inherent in habit itself, but comes from the failure to give it its place in a hierarchy or organization of habits, in which the limits to the lower are found in the higher. If it be objected that this only reduces life to a still more all-penetrating mechanism, we are brought in reply to a final point that the view of habit we are criticizing overlooks. Dr. Stout<sup>1</sup> has drawn attention to the difference between habits that may be described as series of muscular movements and what he calls "habits of thought and volition"—the habit, for instance, of a thinker in applying a particular method to any subject that comes before him, such as the mediæval scheme of the syllogism or the conception of natural selection. The difference is that while in the first "automatic processes may enter as component parts into a total process which as a whole is far from automatic," "here a comprehensive habitual tendency realizes itself on special occasions by means of special processes which are not habitual." Dr. Stout notices the case in which habits of this kind may be mere prejudices, as in the habitual acceptance of authority, and constitute an obstacle to progress. But we can see how it may be made a corrective

<sup>1</sup> *Analytic Psychology*, ii. 261 foll.

of such prejudices and of the obstructive influence of all habit. This it will be when it takes the form of a habit of vigilance to the claims of the situation. Aristotle's "habit of choosing the mean" is a classical instance. Other examples are a man's "style" of work or play. The great bowler Spofforth is said to have refused to practise at the net lest he should acquire tricks of style.<sup>1</sup> So far from involving a failure of the vigilant attitude of mind, such a habit forms a guarantee of its permanence. It was this that Rousseau meant by his paradox that "the only habit a child ought to be allowed to form was the habit of forming none."

It is a further application of the same principle when we note from the side of emotion the difference between the mere dulling of feeling that comes from the repetition of some particular experience and the formation of settled modes of emotional response to certain objects and ideas. We have seen how the subordination of feeling is the condition of settled ways of thinking and acting. But these settlements have themselves to be kept fluid in the interest of progress. And the way in which this is done is through a mode of feeling that owes its existence, if not to habit in the ordinary sense, yet to the soul's power of secreting emotions in the form of a disposition to feel. The true analysis of our "sentiments" comes as near a real discovery as any other of the achievements of modern psychology.<sup>2</sup> The point that concerns us here is that not only may feelings like that of the pity that doctor or nurse experiences at the sight of pain or disease be prevented from hardening into indifference through familiarity with suffering and through the for-

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Graham Wallas quotes in a similar connection his saying, "Show me a man who knows how he is going to play the next ball, and I will show you a man whom I can bowl out" (Op. cit., chapter on "Habit").

<sup>2</sup> The merit belongs chiefly to Mr. Alexander Shand. See especially his masterly book on *The Foundations of Character*.



mation of settled ways of calmly reacting to it, and thus become the channel of

A tide that moving seems to sleep,  
Too deep for sound or foam,

but there is nothing to hinder this disposition from becoming attached to the idea of progress itself. The enthusiasm for discovery in a Pasteur or for reform of the treatment of the sick in a Florence Nightingale is none the less a habit because it is the enemy of habit.<sup>1</sup> The significance of all this will become apparent when we turn from mind in the individual to mind in society. Meantime we come to our main subject in the present lecture, the consideration of actions which are consciously purposeful—in other words, of will.

#### § 4. PURPOSEFUL ACTION.

We may take it perhaps as a matter of common agreement that actions which are willed differ from instinctive and habitual action by the presence of an idea of the object or end, and that this idea is a factor in the execution of them. Theory, however, differs in the interpretation of the nature of this ideal element and the source of its motive power. An old and familiar theory was that the idea is that of the pleasure the object will give. Will springs from desire, and the primary, if not the only, object of desire is pleasure. It is no longer necessary to combat this theory, but before we pass from it, it is important to notice the element of truth which it contains. It recognizes at least that a thing can only be an object of desire and will in so far as it corresponds to some interest and rouses some feeling in the subject or self. It erred

<sup>1</sup> The doctor in *Rab and his Friends*, on being asked whether the sight of so much pain does not harden the heart, replies (I quote from memory), "No; what it does is to transform the emotion of pity into a motive."—J. H. M.

in the assumption that the one fundamental interest was pleasure—the only feeling was for feeling. With the recognition of natural and acquired tendencies to seek other things (if pleasure can be called a thing at all) as represented in idea, the problem of the will shifted to that of the relation of idea to tendency, and a new starting-point was found in the motive power that any idea may possess by merely occupying the centre of attention. Let an idea be present with sufficient force either owing to its superior vividness or to the temporary absence of competitors, and action follows. This has suggested to psychologists to seek for the type of volition in the “self-realization of an idea.” Illuminating as we believe the discovery of the relation between will and attention to be, it can only be a source of error if it be taken to mean that the presence and operation of an image gives us the type of will. We have already noted the fundamental place of instinct and interest in action; ideas move through the energy which may be said to have been latent in the body-mind organism. Even in the extreme case of hypnotic suggestion the idea suggested must correspond to some organic instinct or acquired faculty.<sup>1</sup> But to say this is to approximate ideo-motor action to instinctive, the mark of which is that the stimulus, whether percept or image, acts as a detonator of stored energy without further mediation. As no mere image can constitute a thought, nor train of images a train of thought, so no mere action in realization of a pictured object can constitute an act of will. The analogy of thought is here our guiding light. We can only indicate what the reader can verify for himself from any authoritative statement of what is involved in thinking.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> It is well known how difficult and even impossible it is to secure in the hypnotee the performance of actions antagonistic to the whole trend of character.

<sup>2</sup> See, e.g., Professor Dewey's *How We Think*. It is doubtful how far he would accept the analogy between thinking and willing on which the argument in the text is founded.

In order that there may be thought in the proper sense there must be what William James calls responsibility—a reference to some larger idea or system of ideas within which a place has to be found for what is given in percept or image. When I *think* it is going to rain I have not merely an image of the rain suggested by present appearances. I mark appearances; I refer them to what I know of the weather; I look at them with my weather eye—accept or reject the suggestion of rain as it agrees with it or offends it. It is just the same with will. In order that there may be responsible action there must be a reference of the idea of the object, however suggested, to some interest more or less permanent in the life of the self and the acceptance or rejection of the object as in harmony or discord with it. It is not the mere sight or image of the umbrella that causes me to take it, but the apprehended relation of the umbrella to a dry skin. Rational, as contrasted with merely *intelligent* action, such as you might have in the higher animals, consists in the control of impulses by some purpose or interest which transforms them from mere psychical events into expressions of a *self*. The phrase “universe of desire” has been used by philosophers<sup>1</sup> to indicate that the unit of the practical reason is not a particular isolated impulse, but an interest from which the particular desire takes its significance. We may avail ourselves of the phrase to bring out the fact that what we will is not an isolated act, but a *concern* or interest (health, family-life, business, etc.), the idea of which acts as a principle of selection and a standard of reference among the objects momentarily presenting themselves and attracting attention. It is in virtue of the possession of these larger ideas that we can be said to possess will at all, seeing that it is in virtue of these that actions are organized and continuity imparted to our lives. What is apt to obscure this element of reference is that ordinarily, as in the case of our beliefs, the element of judgment and choice remains at the level of intuition,

<sup>1</sup> See J. S. Mackenzie's *Manual of Ethics* (4th ed.), p. 47.



agreement or disagreement being immediately felt, owing to the existence of general habits of willing such as have already been described—"volitional assumptions," as we might now call them—which automatically control whole areas of our lives. On the other hand, just as in the case of belief, when a doubt or a contradiction disturbs its habitual flow, intelligence is instantly on the alert in the form of judgment, so it is with will. Let a mistake be made or an alternative suggested, intuition rises to explicit judgment: "This is not what I intended," "This other is more what I want." It is from its connection with these universes of interest that the grouping by recent psychology of the various forms of the self as the bodily, the spiritual, the social, the ideal derives significance for social theory, and to this we shall have to return. Meantime to follow it out would only bring us back to the difficulties which the above statement of the principle of volitional action raises. We may note one or two of the most fundamental in the hope of bringing its general bearing into clearer light.

#### § 5. THE UNITY OF WILL.

Willing, it will be said, implies will as thinking implies understanding; and will, like understanding, however diverse its universes or modes of expression, must constitute a single universe. But the result so far has been merely to dissipate it in a number of separate wills: there seems nothing left to give substance to the idea of a unitary will. The difficulty is a familiar one in philosophy, and different ways of solving it have been proposed. By some, as by Hobbes, the result has been accepted and life reduced to a conflict of elements or appetites possessing no principle of unity in themselves. Others have followed Kant in maintaining the existence of a transcendental entity which disowns all particular interests of selves, overawing them by the mere weight of its authority. The answer to both is contained in the result we reach. We have

only to carry a step farther the analogy on which we have insisted between thought and will, and the interpretation of reason and the reasonable that is implied in it. In the analysis of knowledge it has been admitted from the time of Hume that it is impossible to discover trace of a mind which knows itself in any form which it does not derive from actual experience. Just so in the analysis of action there is no discoverable trace of a will which is not the assertion of some experience-given interest. On the other hand, just as underlying all our judgments of truth there is an assumption of the unity and consistency of all knowledge—call it the uniformity of nature, the unity of truth, or what we please—so underlying our judgments of goodness for particular elements in the self there is the assumption of the interrelation of all of them, and of the possibility of bringing their good into harmony with a totality of *good*. It is this whole of good with which ethical theory occupies itself, and diverse as are the accounts which have been given of it in the past, it is perhaps not dogmatism at the present time to assert one or two things on which different schools are largely in agreement.

1. It is to be conceived of as something inclusive of the organic needs of a being of the large discourse distinctive of man—from the lowest physical need of health and well-being to the highest spiritual of converse with the world of Nature and Deity.

2. This fullness of life is not something directly attainable by a mere process of addition of one to the other. Good is not a mere accumulation of separate goods any more than truth is a mere accumulation of truths. It is a real whole, an order or economy<sup>1</sup> realizable only by the subordination of the parts to the idea or form of the whole.

3. It is this transformation that constitutes them *moral*

<sup>1</sup> The account here given is likely enough to be set down as "idealistic." It is significant of the tendency of present-day ethics to such an idealism that the leaders of the "new Realism" have adopted it (see Professor Perry's *The Moral Economy* and Dr. Holt's *The Freudian Wish in Ethics*).

as contrasted with merely natural goods. Just as in knowledge sensory experiences—the rising of the sun, the waning of the moon—have to be reinterpreted and so far transformed before they can take their place in the logical system of truth, so the reactions of our instinctive and habitual dispositions to objects that fulfil them have to be controlled and recast in the form that allows them to be taken up into the ethical system of good.

4. While we must hold that nothing is morally good which does not reflect the fullness and perfection of life as understood at any particular time, the idea of such perfection is not necessarily present as an explicit object in the mind of the moral agent, any more than the ideal of truth as a coherent whole is present to the logical thinker. Modern psychology has familiarized us with the notion that “there is more in the mind than is before the mind.” This holds of ideals as of ideas. As the immediate object of thought is always some concrete experience in which we seek to see the reflection of a larger experience, the immediate object of action is always some concrete object in which we seek to find the fulfilment of a general interest. But just as behind the idea of the larger experience there is the idea of a truth of which this itself is only a part, so behind the will to the particular good there is the consciousness (or if it be preferred, the subconsciousness) of its relation to a whole of good of which it is only the partial realization. Feebly as in both cases it may act in the mind of some at all times, and of all at some times, strange as may be the forms it takes in different ages, vague and indefinite as it must be at the best, the idea of an order of knowledge and of good and of a kind of thought and action which gives effect to it is one the mind cannot part with without ceasing to be human. It is this idea of a total good—a complete and coherent self manifesting itself among the partial and discordant selves of everyday life, to which we give the name of moral consciousness or conscience. Recent sociology has called attention to the “collective repre-



sentations " of early group life as a phase of consciousness which seems to have no relation to the rational judgments of civilized man.<sup>1</sup> These have doubtless their place in the development of the contents—what we might call the body—of conscience. The soul of it we must find, with Mr. Wells,<sup>2</sup> in an intuited idea of a good struggling to assert itself in the darkness and chaos of the primitive mind. So far are collective representations from being the source of this idea—they themselves may be said rather to owe their origin to this deeper stratum of the mind's dawning consciousness of itself. They are the Brocken Shadows cast by the traveller himself in the light of the early morning. In moral as in intellectual development there are epochs or "acts" doubtless, but there are no transformation scenes. The process is one whereby the principle of organization, involved from the first, gradually obtains conscious control, and impulses and habits come to be moulded after the pattern of the universe of real values as it commends itself to thought and reason.

#### § 6. WILL AND THE WORLD.

So far our reply to the difficulty stated above has leant upon the analogy between thought and will. But the validity of this may be said to be itself an assumption: it ignores a fundamental distinction which is fatal to any conclusion that we may seek to draw with regard to the nature of society as partaking of the unity of mind. Granted, it may be said, that thinking and willing are functions of one mind—may even be said to be inseparable from each other—there is yet this essential difference between them, that while in thinking we seek to make our ideas conform to the world of men and things, in willing we seek to make the world conform to our ideas. The consequence is that in the matter of our thinking we are justified in assuming a resultant harmony in our thoughts,

<sup>1</sup> See Mr. Clement Webb's *Group Theories of Religion*.

<sup>2</sup> See above, p. 30

seeing that they reproduce what is *prima facie* a single world. The guarantee of the unity of intelligence is found in the unity of the cosmos. In will it is different. Will starts from the side of our ideas. "The practical," says Hegel, who was the first to make this clear, "begins with thinking, with the 'I' itself"<sup>1</sup>—and the "I," as we have seen, is merely the meeting-point of interests which at least *prima facie* clash with one another. This is true particularly of the individual and the social selves. We may start from one or the other of these and seek to adapt the world of other wills to its needs, but the world will be different and will reflect the conflict of their inner springs. You may secure peace by a *tour de force* in the outer as in the inner, but you have no guarantee of its stability.

In attempting to indicate the directions in which the reply to this objection is to be sought, it is not necessary to deny the difference between thought and will. Thought is reality translating itself into idea; will is idea translating itself into reality. But we mistake the difference when we conceive of idea and reality in either case as two separate things in stark antithesis to each other. The reality to which in thinking we seek to conform our ideas is one which has already been reflected upon, and is already reflected in the medium of ideas. It comes to us permeated with the work of the mind upon it. It is thus represented rather by science and language than by an eternal world of crude, unassimilated fact. Thought is the effort to assimilate what is already potentially its own. The citadel it besieges is in secret league with it and has already been betrayed. A similar correction has to be made from the opposite side in the case of the will. The individual will does not face a world with purposes that have no relation to it or have to be imposed upon it from without. The doctrine of Reminiscence expounded by Plato holds of purposes as of ideas, of the moral as of the intellectual world. Our desires have been shaped in us by forms of life already instinct with social meanings.

<sup>1</sup> *Philosophy of Right*, § 4, add.

"The child," says Hegel, "is suckled at the breast of the universal ethos." To like effect, W. Wallace has spoken of the affections as a social inheritance communicated to the child with its mother's milk. To this we may add that the affections are only the medium in which a relationship works which, by and bye, may be apprehended by intelligence and come to operate as an idea.<sup>1</sup> It is quite true that when will awakes, it is the will of a self which seeks to use the world of things and of other selves by shaping them to its desire. But to get the full utility out of them they must be used according to their own nature, and the nature of other selves is themselves to be wills. This means, not only the moulding of their wills to ours, but of ours to theirs. What makes this a possible and a satisfying condition is that our good from the first is something unrealizable apart from others' good—the good of a person in a world of persons. The way of the will we may therefore say—the way to the realization of our idea of the good—is neither by the mere assertion of it against the world, nor by the resignation of it to the world of other wills as to something foreign, but by making it actually what it already is potentially, the reflection of an order of which they are a part. True, this order is not there through any consensus or overt consent of the different elements of the individual self. Nevertheless, by its coherence as the working system we call "society," it constitutes a guarantee of their ultimate unity in just as true a sense as the working system we call "truth" is the guarantee of the unity of our beliefs. It is of this view of organized society as at once the embodiment of a will which is other than the individual, and, at the same time, the interpreter of it to himself, that we must seek confirmation in turning to the consideration of mind in society.

NOTE ON DR. McDUGALL'S THEORY OF VOLITION.

The theory of volition in this chapter is so fundamental that it may not be out of place here to try further to

<sup>1</sup> See below, p. 141.



illustrate it by a comparison of it with the doctrine so succinctly stated by Dr. McDougall in the supplementary Chapter I in the last edition of his *Social Psychology*.<sup>1</sup>

Dr. McDougall begins by stating what differentiates behaviour as the action of living things from physical or mechanical action. It consists of four marks, striving towards an end, variation of the means employed for its attainment, the implication of the whole organism in the act, modification of the activity in the direction of economy and efficiency. He next distinguishes behaviour as we have it in the lower animals from conduct or voluntary action in man, which consists, not "in a succession of different states of the subject called states of consciousness or ideas or what not, but always in an activity of a subject in respect to an object apprehended, an activity which constantly changes, or modifies the relation between subject and object."<sup>2</sup> While accepting the presence of an idea as the mark of volition, the writer proceeds to qualify this by noting on the one hand that the goal of the action is anticipated with very different degrees of clearness at different levels of mental life and, on the other hand, that the actions of even the lowest animals very likely imply a vague awareness of something, together with some vague forward reference or anticipation of change in this something. Coming to the relation between the idea and the actual conation or purposive activity, he impresses upon us that it is not one of cause or determining condition. It "merely serves to guide the course of action in detail; the essential condition of action is that a conative tendency, a latent disposition to action, should be evoked." It is these "conative dispositions," with which each organism has been endowed "as a part of its hereditary equipment for the battle of life," that gives motive force to the idea. The further definition of these dispositions Dr. McDougall sets aside as the province of metaphysical speculation, with which social psychology has nothing to do. Psychology has to do with explaining

<sup>1</sup> June 1915.

<sup>2</sup> Op. cit. 35.

human conduct in terms of appetition. "When and not until we can exhibit any particular instance of conduct as the expression of conative tendencies which are ultimate constituents of the organism we can claim to have explained it."<sup>1</sup>

There is much in this account which we have no difficulty in accepting and for which, like other students of social psychology, we may be grateful. We have ourselves laid emphasis on the continuity between merely instinctive and purposeful action, though we should have thought that for the understanding of society it is the deeper continuity which Dr. McDougall calls metaphysical, the anticipation of the ends of self-conscious beings and the preparation for them, that in the working of instinct is important. We have emphasized also the place of disposition as that which invests the idea with its motive power. We are prepared to go farther, and to note that the selection of the idea depends, not in its merely presenting itself to the mind, but on its harmony with one or other of the many conative dispositions with which the organism is endowed at birth or comes to be endowed through experience. Where the writer seems to err is in stopping short of the complete analysis of the ideal element in desire and will. He speaks of it vaguely as "the perception (or other mode of cognition)," "the process of representing or conceiving," but his favourite expression is "anticipatory representation," which makes it clear that he allies himself with the view above criticized which identifies the thought, in which we have found the essence of volition to consist, with an image. "Psychology" may be content with provisional statements of the truth of the mind's action, but it is an unnecessary limitation of it to deny it the right to distinguish image from judgment. He appeals to Professor Stout's "anoetic consciousness." But the point of that doctrine is surely that apperception is implicit judgment, not that all thought is "representation." He speaks rightly of ideas of meaning and value,

<sup>1</sup> Ibid. 363

"our consciousness of striving to realize ideals, to live up to standards of conduct," as an essential element in man's volitional life and a disproof of mechanical interpretations of human life. But it is difficult to find a place for meaning in an analysis that resolves willing into the presence of an image or representation and an automatic outflow of the energy of a disposition. The writer himself seems to feel that something is wanting, and at the end of the chapter attempts to supply the missing link by a reference to T. H. Green's view, with which he identifies his own. The reference illustrates rather than removes the defect just pointed out. Green, we are told, maintains that only when the self intervenes to accept or resist desire or impulse do we perform a volitional act. No quotations are given, but this is roughly the view which Green has developed at length under the form of the distinction between "the direction of a self-conscious self to the realization of an object, its identification of itself with that object on the one hand, and on the other side the mere solicitations of which a man is conscious."<sup>1</sup> But it is just this element of self-identification (which we have called at one level the *sense*, at another the *judgment* of harmony with some interest of the self) that Dr. McDougall's theory has failed to bring into prominence. Moreover, when he goes on without further ado to identify the self that is present as an element in all choice with the "true self," and the true self with "the character of a man," "the organized system of habits of will," he must seem to the careful student of Green to miss the real point of Green's whole doctrine. It need hardly be said that when Green speaks of the true self and its correlative, the "true good," he has in view, not the actual character of a man, "the organized system of his habits of will," and the objects which are in harmony with that will, nor the fraction of the deeper self which his habits have been able to include, but the outlines of the fuller self, "the fully articulated idea of the best life for man."<sup>2</sup> However

<sup>1</sup> *Prolegomena to Ethics*, § 143 fin.

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.* § 179.



unnecessary this idea may seem to the psychologist who seeks to explain all our volitions in terms of "the laws of appetition," it is the only one, according to Green, "by which, reflecting on our moral and intellectual experience conjointly, taking the world and ourselves into account, we can put the whole thing together and understand how (not *why* but *how*) we are and do what we consciously are and do."<sup>1</sup> Dr. McDougall speaks of action as the expression of tendencies united according to a "plan of organization." True; but the point for the moralist is that there are different plans, and that actions have different value according to the value of the plan. His problem is that of the standard of value. Green taught that the standard is to be looked for in the will itself, which he conceived of as committed by its nature as an aspect of self-conscious intelligence to a standard which is reflected inwardly in an enlightened conscience, outwardly in the higher forms of civilized society—in both albeit imperfectly. If, as he seems to do, Dr. McDougall means this, the view of the will that is of significance for social theory begins where his account ends.

<sup>1</sup> Op. cit. § 174. The rest of the passage runs : "Given this conception, and not without it, we can at any rate express that which it cannot be denied demands expression, the nature of man's reason and will, of human progress and human shortcoming, of the effort after good and the failure to gain it, of virtue and vice, in their connection and in their distinction, in their essential distinction and in their no less essential unity."

## CHAPTER IV

### WILL IN SOCIETY

#### § 1. THE PROBLEM OF A COMMON WILL.

WE have seen in the previous lecture, in the first place, how the activity of the individual mind—in the wide sense of the word, its willing—starts from impulses and propensities directed to a variety of objects, but having their unity guaranteed by the unity of the body-mind organism, instinct with the single impulse to assert or realize actually what it is potentially. In the second place, we have seen how these impulses no longer in man, as they do in the lower animals, maintain automatically the equilibrium prescribed by the form of life distinctive of him. Man depends on the teaching of a wider experience than his own and the formation of habits which constitute a rearrangement and transformation of mere natural instinct. Multitudinous and loosely jointed as these habits are apt to be in the individual, their unity and subservience to the higher form of life is secured on the whole by the fact that they grow up in the environment of a society whose structure is the result of an age-long process of adaptation and on the whole represent an assimilation to it. Coming next to purposeful direction—will in the proper sense of the word—we saw how the essence of it was to be looked for in the relation of an object to an interest, “concern,” or as we have preferred to call it, a self; and that these interests, concerns, or selves, however diverse and even conflicting in particular cases

they may be, have their ultimate unity, and with it that of the will, guaranteed by the inherently organic nature of the self as a whole, at this level presenting itself as the ideal of an inclusive form of life from which all elements of inward or outward conflict have disappeared. To the objection that this unity is a *mere* ideal, a metaphysical or transcendental notion with no actual counterpart in reality, we replied by appealing to the real existence of a world of moral values only explicable through the operation of such an idea, just as the world of logical values is only explicable through the operation of the idea of the unity of truth.

In turning from the nature of mind and will in the individual to mind and will in society, it is important to realize precisely what our question in the first instance is. It is not the question how the mind of the individual is affected by the minds of "others." This, as we have seen, is an interesting and important question for social psychology. The "others" we are speaking of are not merely other individuals but other *socii*, or members of a society. Even so the problem is not primarily how society affects the individual. This is part of our question.<sup>1</sup> But it is a part we cannot even formulate intelligibly until we have decided whether it is a case comparable to the action of material particles or to that of one *mind* acting on another.<sup>2</sup> Our question is whether and in what sense we can say that society, with its institutions, laws, government, traditions, in a word, its whole organized structure, can be said to be produced by and in turn to reproduce the structure of mind and will, including its ideal aspirations for a fuller, stronger, and more coherent form of life and character.

<sup>1</sup> P. 44.

<sup>2</sup> See Mr. MacIver's strictures on Durkheim's remark: "I do not at all deny that the individual natures are the components of society. The question is whether the synthesis is purely mechanical or chemical" (*Community*, p. 87). The answer, we must believe, is that it is neither, but teleological.



## § 2. THE INSTINCTIVE BASIS OF SOCIETY.

The action of instinct in the formation of society, follows as a corollary from the recognition of its place in human life as a whole. We defined instinct as the mental side of the organization of the body. But the body is not a self-contained whole. As Plato<sup>1</sup> long ago perceived, the very form of the body pointed beyond itself to its need of mates. So instincts carry the individual out to union with others, and it is not too much to say that there is no form of social union, from the "primary groups" of family and neighbourhood to the secondary of tribe and nation and the tertiary of religion and civilization, which has not its roots in instinctive tendencies. How far the particular form which man's moral needs prescribe was anticipated at the instinctive stage—how far, for instance, the earliest form of marriage was monogamous; or, again, the tribal group was prior to the family as the homogeneous to the distinctions within it or families to the tribe which was formed by their union—are problems of anthropology with which we need not here concern ourselves.<sup>2</sup> The value of an institution for human life is not in our view dependent on its being natural in the sense of primitive. What is important to realize is that the union of individuals through the reproductive, parental, and gregarious instincts into groups represents a step in the development of animal and human life comparable to the advance from unicellular to multicellular organisms.<sup>3</sup> Like this biological advance, it secured that from the first the unit in the struggle for existence should be the group and not the individual, and with this that room should be left (growing in proportion to the extent and strength of the corporate life) for experiments in individual variation one day to be called the liberties of the individual.

<sup>1</sup> The reader will remember his humorous statement in the *Symposium*, p. 189 foll.

<sup>2</sup> See below, chap. vii.

<sup>3</sup> See Trotter's *The Herd Instinct in Peace and War*, p. 18.

It is not our purpose to trace the forms of social instinct in detail from the parental to the gregarious and the instinct of kind. But there are two points that, in view of current misunderstandings, it is important to notice.

1. With reference to the action of imitation, which has been emphasized by recent social psychology, the full recognition of the place of these instincts points to the interpretation of it rather as the primitive form in which the individual seeks and achieves an inward union with a social environment already there than as the source of that union. Like the treatment of the other instincts (if it is to be called an instinct at all), the treatment of imitation has suffered from its being taken far too much in isolation from the whole organism of instincts, with the result that the truth has been inverted. Man imitates because he is social; he is not social because he imitates. It is not surprising that under the influence of this inversion the action of crowds has been taken as the type instead of as the dissolution of organized society. Another step and openness of the individual to the influences of the collective mind on which all corporate life depends is treated as dependent on the dissipation of the inner unity of the individual mind, and corporate life as the sphere of its weakness and not of its strength. Mr. Trotter is right in protesting against M. Sidis's anarchical psychology in this respect.<sup>1</sup> But his own treatment of the herd instinct in abstraction from its meaning as only the first realization of an organized (social) body which has the potentiality of human life, is hardly less fatal to the proper understanding of its true place in social development.

2. While the social or inclusive instincts, as they have been called, have been instrumental in the organic formations of society, the more individual and exclusive have been equally potent in welding them together and giving individuality to them. Of these the most important and, in the eyes of some, the most ambiguous are the possessive and the pugnacious. In reality, as already pointed

<sup>1</sup> Op. cit., p. 26,

out,<sup>1</sup> the possessive instinct, which leads, e.g., to the acquisition of home or field, is not really separable from the process by which the individual or group develops its faculties and gives itself a real place as mind and will in the world of men and things. Its comparative weakness in primitive life or its excessive development in a particular age and under particular circumstances does not affect its essential importance in these respects. The problem of civilization with regard to it is neither the elimination of it or its limitation from without, but the subordination of it to the wider ends of the community which makes its exercise possible. What is true of the possessive is true of the pugnacious. Enmity to what lies outside a group is only the negative aspect of the affection that holds it together, and it is difficult to see how groups could have come to be more than loose and fluctuating aggregates, apart from the pressure of a hostile environment, to meet which new and primarily instinctive forms of organization had to be adopted. Here, too, the problem of civilization is of the means by which the inward cohesion of societies is to be maintained and developed when reason and will take the place of instinct, when co-operation and emulation are substituted for strife and competition<sup>2</sup> as the organizing forces of human life.

### § 3. CUSTOM.

While social, like individual life may be said to be rooted in instinct, it is no more possible in the one case than in the other to speak of an instinctive stage in development. The sketch which modern anthropology gives us of a primitive man without customs of dress except the custom of wearing none, without marriage, burial, or religious rites of any definable kind, comes as near it as

<sup>1</sup> P. 54.

<sup>2</sup> See Dr. McDougall's suggestive remarks on emulation as a permanent force in society (*Social Psychology*, p. 294).



we are likely to get to such a stage.<sup>1</sup> On the other hand, the existence of a stage in social development in which the prominent feature is the domination of the ideas and actions of the individual by the traditional beliefs and modes of action of his group is by this time a commonplace of social philosophy. Our task here is not to describe it, but to direct attention to the light that is thrown upon its essential features by what has been said as to the nature of habit in the individual.

(a) HABIT AND CUSTOM.

It is important to realize where precisely the analogy begins and ends. If we were to start, as some do, from the assumption of the existence of a social mind, distinct from the minds of the individuals who compose the society, it would be legitimate to speak of customs as social habits in the sense that we should have to conceive of the social mind as controlled by the inertia of its own past instead of by any conscious reference to the ends which the custom achieves. Rejecting this hypothesis, as we do, we have to recognize that while from the point of view of society it may be permissible to identify custom and habit, from the point of view of the individual it is clear that custom involves something more. It is habit writ large, but it is also habit writ in a form that brings into evidence an element which, in the case of the habits of the individual, lies in the background. "Custom," says Mr. Hobhouse,<sup>2</sup> "is not a habit of action merely, but implies judgment." It involves the recognition of a mode of action established in the group to which the individual has to conform. The conformity is instinctive. There is no question as to whether he will conform or not, but the recognition is essential. It is for this reason that while we may attribute

<sup>1</sup> See, e.g., Wundt's account of Primitive Man in his *Elements of Folk Psychology*, chap. 1.

<sup>2</sup> *Morals in Evolution*, i. 13.

habits to animals, they have no customs, for they have no traditions. To use the distinction drawn between different kinds of habit,<sup>1</sup> we may say that custom depends upon a habit of thinking, the habit of referring to the past, and to the mode of conduct it prescribes.<sup>2</sup>

(b) THE RATIONALE OF HABIT.

Without pretending to be able to find a "sufficient reason" for all customs, there are certain things which the analogy we have taken as our guide enables us to expect and history in large degree substantiates. We have seen that if we understand habit in a sufficiently wide sense, the great mass of our habits represent adaptations of the body-soul organism to the physical and social environment that is the means of satisfying its needs. The exception of so-called 'bad habits' proves the rule. They either are survivals that it is "time to give up," or serve some narrow and partial satisfaction "heedless of fair gain," and therefore have a precarious footing in an organism whose fundamental impulses are always carrying it beyond the present and the partial. All this is true of customs *mutatis mutandis*. There is perhaps none of

<sup>1</sup> Above, p. 58.

<sup>2</sup> While thus differing from individual habit, it may be said that custom must originate in it. But this is to antedate the influence of individual over corporate action. Granted the reality of collective suggestion, there is no necessity to assume that a mode of action must spread from one individual to another and thence to a group. What seems to happen is that by the instinctive union of the sexes, instinctive gregariousness in the group, the individual will is from the first identified with ends that are common and the means instinctively adopted and fixed by repetition in the achievement of them. Thenceforth these  $\eta\theta\eta$  stand out as a standard for the individual to which those instinctive tendencies which are more personal to himself have to conform, control by them becoming an integral part of his habits ( $\epsilon\theta\eta$ ). If there is any question of priority, it would thus seem truer to say that custom precedes habit than *vice versa*. On the whole subject of the present section see Wundt's *Facts of the Moral Life*.

which, however repugnant to our notions, we may not say that at one time it served or (what for our purposes amounts to the same thing) was thought to serve some useful end. The practices out of which they sprang were ways of attaining, according to the ideas of the time, some individual or social good ; the continuance of them followed a true instinct to economize effort by limiting individual caprice and random experiment. Bad customs at the most represent a marginal element, maintaining themselves either by their own inertia, which means, of course, the psychical inertia of the group, or by their appeal to some lower, radically unsocial element. It is, for example, in this way that the funeral feast, at one time a feast of the gods, at another serving the purpose of needed refreshment for distant friends,<sup>1</sup> might linger on as an occasion of display or gluttony. These are the customs which are more honoured in the breach than in the observance. Like bad habits, they are essentially unstable. If they concern the deeper conditions of life, the group must either eliminate or be eliminated by them. The difficulty of pointing to customs that are purely bad illustrates the movement of adaptation that is usually going on beneath their apparent stability. What usually happens is that new purposes are grafted on the old stem, which, from the service of physical necessities, may be turned to the service of religion, ultimately of the higher forms of social life. In this way the fire in the hearth, cherished originally from physical necessity, may become an object of worship and end by being the symbol of all that is dearest in home and country ; the toast connected perhaps originally with the exchange of a drop of blood to cement a friendship,<sup>2</sup> in danger later of becoming a

<sup>1</sup> I have attended funerals in remote Highland glens where the service of drink was an occasion for lingering at the grave, not without angry protests of the host and the officiating minister. —J. H. M.

<sup>2</sup> See, in this instance, Wundt, *op. cit.* p. 143 (Eng. trans.), and in general what he says on the "metamorphosis of custom."



meaningless ceremony, ends by becoming, as at the Lord Mayor's banquet, the occasion of important political announcements.

But the analogy of habit carries us a step farther. As we fail to do justice to habits if we omit to notice that they form a system in which the wider act as the guardian of the narrower and at the same time exercise a controlling influence upon them, so it is with custom. Starting with those that serve the organic needs of food, clothing, shelter, and defence for the individual and his belongings, we pass to those that regulate the intercourse of the individual with others through forms of salutation, contract, ceremonial games, thence to those that relate again in hierarchical order to the more organic forms of life in the family, the nation, and the State. While the wider may be later in origin and psychically more unstable, they are endowed from the first with greater social authority and exercise a steadily increasing pressure on the narrower to adapt themselves to their requirements. It is in the light of this fact that, as we have already rejected the idea that habit is in essence a subjection of the individual to mechanical laws and the enemy of personality, we must reject the view that these institutions represent at the best an arrested progress and ought to be recognized to-day as the citadels of organized egoism.<sup>1</sup> As a matter of fact, the spirit that created them has never ceased to operate within them, now working unconsciously in adaptations such as we have already mentioned, at other times manifesting itself in legislation which, starting with the regulation of individual intercourse (contracts, debts, etc.), extends upwards to the regulation of the family and ends with the reform of the State itself. If we ask, "*Quis custodiet custodem?*" what guarantees society against the recurrence of the worst faults of tradition with the added menace to free movement and development which

<sup>1</sup> For an eloquent expression of this view in an attack on European civilization in general, and particularly on the nation, see Rabindranath Tagore's recent book upon *Nationalism*.

comes from the existence of a determinate and articulated will of government? the answer is that here, as in the case of habit, we have to rely on the maintenance of the vigilant outlook on the ends in whose name adaptation and reform are sought. But this, again, is possible only when such an outlook is itself embodied in a tradition, for the establishment and maintenance of which governmental institutions like a national system of education may themselves provide the most effectual means. This we may hope will become clearer as we turn to the action of purposeful will in society.

#### § 4. WILL AND PURPOSE IN SOCIETY.

It is here we approach the centre of our subject. It is not too much to say that all differences in social theory have their ultimate source in differences as to the sense in which will and purpose may be attributed to society. We may begin by freely admitting the paradox which the phrase "social will" seems to involve. So long as we are considering mind from the side of instinct and habit, there seems no inherent difficulty in recognizing a species of common mind. Sociologists have familiarized us with the psychology of crowds. "Epidemics of action and belief" have been made comprehensible by the action of the same motives and the same external influences on all the individuals of a group and producing, as it has been expressed by Dr. Mercier, "consentaneous emotions and modes of action passing like a wave over communities of men, engulfing them in a common feeling, impelling them all to similar action." It is only going a step farther to recognize that this similarity may become fixed as a tradition, the same modes of action, feeling, and belief reproducing themselves in individuals and giving at least the appearance of a common mind. But when we come to intelligent will and purpose, implying, as we have seen it does, not only the presence of the idea of an end or object in the mind, but a reference to the self as finding fulfilment

in the object, the question is forced upon us, In what sense can there be a common will and a common self which is more than a mere collection of individual wills? An end which is common in the sense of being "in the group" over and above the separate ends of the individuals which compose it is apt to present the appearance of paradox.

In spite of the paradox, the idea of a real community of will is deeply rooted in ordinary thought and language which confidently appeals to the mind of a nation, of a whole group of nations, or of a period against the limited minds of individuals, and seems to be supported in the appeal by familiar facts. To take a single and recent example: individuals and nations who threw themselves into the great war at the beginning did so from various motives, to find later that they had been caught up into a larger purpose than they were aware of, pointing to issues unconnected and even inconsistent with their original aims.

It is facts like these that have led to the realistic hypothesis (reminding us of the mediæval theory of "universals before the thing," traceable to Plato) that over and above the wills of individuals there is in society an active principle possessing all the essential attributes of will and permeating and overruling for purposes of its own the particular short-sighted ends which individuals set consciously before themselves.<sup>1</sup> Just, too, as there were others who rejected these universals as mere "breath of the voice," so there are those who, resenting the mysticism of such a conception as inconsistent with modern methods of interpretation, have preferred to explain the achievement of societies as due to the survival of an irrational instinct acting in the herd before its atomization into the individual minds and wills which composed it.<sup>2</sup> As the

<sup>1</sup> See, for instance, John Henry Newman's theory of the angelic guardianship and control of social action.

<sup>2</sup> This social nominalism takes different forms according as the appeal is to a survival, as with the French school of M. Lévy Brühl, or to a revival of sympathy under the influence of an altruistic religion, as with Mr. Benjamin Kidd.



way of escape from the dilemma of realism and nominalism is through a truer psychology of the concept, so the way of escape from the dilemma of a mystical supra-social person and the denial of a corporate consciousness is through a truer psychology of the will. We have tried in the last lecture to give a sketch of the line such a psychology must follow : it remains to apply it to the problem of the reality of the general will.

For this application the ground has been prepared by what has been already said in the present chapter of instinct and custom. Just as the true theory of the concept is anticipated in the modern analysis of sense-perception into apperception founded on dispositions or habits of organized interpretation, so the true view of the meaning of the general will is anticipated in the recognition that the organic forms of society are a precipitate of instincts, habits, and dispositions which, from the first, are not merely individual, but point beyond individual and exclusive interests to an interest in the whole. Sex and family affection is an individual impulse, but it acts in a social medium, and may be said to hold in solution the affection for the organized whole which at once makes its exercise possible and endows it with a meaning. To form habits and submit to custom is a natural and, if you like, a blind tendency of animate nature. But customs, as we have seen, are formed in the parts under the moulding influence of the whole, which has to adapt itself to its environment. While, therefore, they are particular modes of conduct, they contain from the first a universal element which acts as a unifying and controlling influence and constitutes them the habits, not of an isolated individual, whatever this might mean, but of a social being.

This being so, the emergence into consciousness of corporate ends is only an instance of the same continuity in the case of society as we have already traced in the case of individual volition. We have seen that the essence of volition consists in the reference of a particular object to a *whole of interest* which in turn is overshadowed and

penetrated in normal cases by the sense of the individual's *interest as a whole*. It is not otherwise with society. The birth of social self-consciousness consists in the elevation into the centre of attention, however momentary and confused, of the universal element—the common purpose which the ways of acting called customs embody. It is not the birth of an entirely new attitude to the social environment any more than the birth of will and intelligence in the individual is an entirely new attitude to objects. The only difference is that the “reference” is now an explicit element in at least some of the members whose actions are determined by an apprehension of the ends that are served by customs and institutions. It is the same logic working in a different medium.

We may take as an illustration what we know of the emergence of law out of custom. The detailed steps by which a society passes from the one stage to the other are wrapt, of course, in obscurity. But it is possible in some instances to go a good way back upon it, and in such brilliant reconstructions as Mr. A. E. Zimmern's account of the establishment in Athenian society<sup>1</sup> of settled law-courts and political government we have a picture of the emergence of the general will out of the confused amalgam of instinct and local custom, that formed the matrix of political consciousness. The essence of such accounts is that law and settled government appear, not as something new superimposed from without, but rather as a “declaration,” as Rousseau would have called it, of the meaning of what was already there. By the time the great legislators appeared, the Lycurguses, the Solons, the Serviuses, the consciousness of this meaning in individual minds has been met by some general demand for the declaration, and that demand is born of a sense of the inadequacy of existing forms to give room for interests which, if not consciously recognized as the interests of the whole, are felt to be necessary to the continued existence of any whole at all. To this it may

<sup>1</sup> *The Greek Commonwealth*, chap. iii. “The City Magistrate.”

perhaps be replied that these are specially selected cases of legislation by agreement. The more common case is conquest and imposition of new conditions from without, as in the case of the Eastern Empires. And even in such selected cases what is forced into recognition is not any universal condition of social well-being, but, as just admitted, some sectional will asserting itself against others equally sectional and maintained in unstable equilibrium by a balance of force rather than a real unity of will. But the answer seems clear. Where the law-giver appears merely in the form of a conqueror, as in the Eastern Empires, we have to look for the social will, not in the amalgam of tribes and nations, but in the separate groups themselves. As has been pointed out by Sir Henry Maine, these empires were merely taxing agencies. They left the life of the nations under them very much as they found them. So far is the conquest from being the birth of political consciousness, by itself it forms an obstruction to its development. The case of reform in *political* societies is, of course, different. But here too it may safely be said that the results, so far as permanent, are never merely the entrenchment of a new interest side by side with an old. The new interest, e.g. that of the plebs in Rome, is asserted, as Menenius said, within a whole which underneath its sectional differences was held together by an interest which was common in as profound a sense as the interest of the organs in the life of the organism, and revealed its true universality by the fact that it assigned to each of the interests its place in a *system*. In such tentative and contentious expressions of a common will, we are still far from the experiments of legislators who work out from clearly realized conceptions of social well-being, farther in the citizens themselves from the idea of loyalty to the State, and farther still from the love of it as the trustee of all they most value in themselves. Yet the instinctive reverence for its symbols and administrators, in the mind of even the least intelligent, witnesses to the hold which already, in rudimentary and



even violently distorted forms, the idea of the whole has upon the roots of the mind, and constitutes the hidden source of its power.<sup>1</sup>

The conclusion to which these considerations point seems to be that in order to assert the reality of a general or social will it is not necessary to assume the action of a will distinct from that of the individuals who compose society. All that it is necessary to assume is that the will of the individual is a more complex thing than the older psychology was prepared to admit; that, underlying the ends which the individual sets before himself in a social world, there is a reference to a wider end than they commonly represent, and that this is none other than the maintenance of the social structure itself. But while this conclusion may be admitted to be valid against the mystical answer to our main problem, it raises a difficulty which seems to give colour to the rival naturalistic solution of it.

We have assumed, it may be said, a social world within which will acts. Once committed to this it may be true enough that we are entangled in its logic and in willing the prosperity of the part we must will the whole. But this does not meet the point obvious in the case of the individual's own material interests, which he seems to be able to will, not only for himself apart from society, but, as in the case of the egoist and the criminal, in opposition to the interests of society. Having admitted this, it is only going a step farther to admit that in identifying itself with one of the narrower forms of society, family, trade, or what not, the will may entrench itself against the wider, and forms of egoism develop which are the more dangerous to the solidarity of the whole because

<sup>1</sup> In Browning's dramatic lyric "Ned Bratts" we have an instance of the social conscience asserting itself under the most unfavourable circumstances of the Royalist State. Social psychology surely misrepresents the facts when it sees in such cases nothing but the action of an unreasoning herd instinct or the product of collective suggestion.

they share its ground and fight it with its own weapons. On the theory of the organic connection of ends which our doctrine involves we are committed to the paradox that these are cases of the abnormal submergence of a prior and more potent, because more logical, will. In reality they are the natural and normal condition of human life, only transcended (if transcended is the word) in moments of crisis and moral panic by the ebullition of instinctive and irrational elements, which merely serve the purpose of rehabilitating the compromise on which the whole fabric of society rests and giving it a new lease of life.<sup>1</sup>

Although we believe that the answer to this is contained in what has already been said, it may be well to repeat it here. The essence of the will, we have maintained, consists in having an idea. This means the power of selection and attention to some aspect, or "universe," of the interests of the self. It is an abstraction of thought and feeling from a whole which in a quite definite sense is a part of the mind, in the enlarged view of mind that modern psychology, with its distinction between focal and marginal or subconscious elements, has rendered familiar. Underlying and merging with the idea of individual good is an attitude to social good. Kept in the background by the vividness of the present interest, it yet extends its influence over it, not only as a feeling, but as an element in its content. Ordinary cases of selfishness there is no paradox in explaining as the result of momentary or habitual neglect of the wider interest. This may be neglected at one point, yet, in virtue of the constitution of human nature, it is bound to assert itself at another, where, just because of the previous denial of it, it is incapable of satisfaction,<sup>2</sup> with the result that life

<sup>1</sup> The reader will remember Browning's poem "Tray"—the "instinctive dog" who puts to shame the selfish hesitation of the crowd to risk its skin and wider prospects to save a drowning child and its doll.

<sup>2</sup> The case of the often pathetic longing of habitually selfish people for human affection is an instance in point.

is a state of continual unrest comparable in the intellectual world to that of the man who seeks to maintain agreeable delusions in the face of the logic of fact. In regard to crime which is not the result of disease or the pressure of circumstances, it is surely no paradox, but a commonplace, to note that end is contradictory to means. In seeking wealth, power, position, the criminal seeks an object which has value only because of the recognition of the society of which the very existence is endangered by the crime. In all these cases the instability of the self-seeking life has its source, not merely in the constitution of the external world, but in the inner constitution of the will itself, which in its essence is in secret league with it. What is true of individual selfishness is true of social selfishness—*egoisme à deux* or *à plusieurs*. What gives the particular form of union its value in the eyes of its devotees is the place it occupies in the social whole. So long as it fills this place and is charged with the social ideal, there is no contradiction between family pride any more than there is between individual self-assertion and the civic spirit. On the other hand, when the spirit of family shows itself in a form no longer in touch with the conditions of social life in general, we have merely the restless ghost of its former self. The "inheritor of the stuff of the family," to use Meredith's phrase, is also the inheritor of the stuff of society of which it is a part.<sup>1</sup> To insist on the

<sup>1</sup> "Aforetime," writes Meredith, "a grand old Egoism built the House. It would appear that ever finer essences of it are demanded to sustain the structure: but especially would it appear that a reversion to the gross original, beneath a mask and in a vein of fineness, is an earthquake at the foundations of the House. Better that it should not have consented to motion, and have held stubbornly to all ancestral ways, than have bred that anarchic spectre. . . . If this line of verse be not yet in our literature—

" 'Through very love of self himself he slew'—

let it be admitted for his epitaph." (Last paragraph of the Prelude to *The Egoist*, "of which the last page only is of any importance.")



perpetuation of it in a form already outworn is to reverse the parable and sew old cloth into new—a process necessarily suicidal.

#### § 6. THE TEST OF THE STATE.

If we are agreed as to this point, we may be ready to accept the conclusion that the structure of society reflects the structure of the will in so far as it represents the principle of unity and totality. But it may be felt that the main problem has hitherto remained untouched. In considering the will of the individual, we were carried from the reference to particular interests or universes to the idea of a universe which includes them and stands for the perfection or completeness of individual human life. In considering will in society, we have in like manner been carried from the idea of organization of individuals for the realization of a particular interest or group of interests to the idea of an organization that includes and guarantees the harmony of the whole as one system. We have contended that there is a general or social will *in any sense* just in so far as the will identifies itself consciously or unconsciously with the interests and purposes for which the different forms of organization exist. There is a general will *in the highest sense* in so far as, further, individuals identify themselves in their actions with the organization which represents the totality of the interests of the man and the citizen. Is there such a totality? If so, *prima facie* the State is the organization in the actual world which most nearly represents it. But just here a difficulty arises; for as we have also contended that this general will is only another name for the more familiar conscience, our doctrine seems to involve that we are to seek in the State for the analogue of conscience in the individual, and must be prepared to endow it with the same absolute authority over the life of the community as is claimed for conscience over the life of the individual. And with this we are embarked on a sea of controversy. On one of two suppositions the solution might be easy.

We might be prepared to adopt the naturalistic view of the State and interpret the conscience of the individual with Hobbes, for instance, as a secondary product of State organization. But this is just what is excluded by the foregoing analysis, according to which the State owes its authority to its function as the guardian of the idea of perfection in which we have found the roots of the will itself. Or again, we might assume the identity of the claims of conscience and of the State in the sense that an ultimate and absolute allegiance is owed by both to the ideal of perfection before which no particular or merely temporary interest, even that of existence itself, can be allowed to stand. But this is precisely the claim that no State can admit. In support of this refusal it is not necessary to appeal to the naturalistic principle *il faut vivre*, or that "necessity knows no law." The ideal interests of which on our showing it is the appointed guardian and interpreter, can only be maintained by its continued existence. To renounce its life as a State is to be false to its trust. Where, therefore, a conflict arises between the claim of conscience speaking in the name of an absolute human perfection, and the claims of the State as the representative of the relative degree of perfection already reached, we are on the horns of a dilemma: either we have to admit the claim of the State—in other words, that might is in the end right—or we must subordinate it to the conscience of the individual, and our theory of the identity of moral and civic obligation has suffered shipwreck. We may admit that there is a general will in the sense that the maintenance of the State is an element in the civic consciousness of its members, but civic consciousness cannot be admitted to be co-ordinate with the conscience of the individual.

In the difficulty thus stated we recognize what is rightly regarded as the central problem of Social Philosophy. We shall have to recur to it in dealing with the State as a particular form of social structure<sup>1</sup>; for the present we

<sup>1</sup> See p. 229 foll.

are engaged with general theory. The question is raised here as the final test of the scope and validity of our general principle, and the answer must be equally general.

We have seen in the first place that human life—the life of will—differs from that of the animals—the life of instinct and habit—not merely in the multitude of its needs nor merely in the power of setting the objects that will satisfy them before itself and conceiving of a better as an object of desire, but in the power of conceiving of a best in which these needs will be fully developed and find the kind of satisfaction which is consonant with their being elements in an organized system. The final condition of such a form of satisfaction is that of a will itself firmly set in the direction of such a unified system of desires—in other words, goodness.

We have further seen that in working towards this end will does not work in a vacuum of its own making such as philosophers have represented to themselves as pure will, but in a medium of self-precipitated habit embodying past achievements and reflecting, in however imperfect a form, the moving equilibrium of human interests. In real, i.e. in social, life this takes the form of customs and institutions which are not something foreign to the freedom of the will, but the organs through which it seeks to secure itself and make itself at home in the world of men and things.

Finally we have seen that in this system of organs there arises under the natural limits set by kinship and locality a supreme form which is the appointed guardian and interpreter of the contributions of all the others to this common purpose and endowed with the power necessary to secure their harmony and efficiency. It is this we call the State in the narrower sense of law and government. It is not surprising that the great thinkers who led the way in this line of thought, both in the ancient and the modern world, should see in it the highest achievement of the human spirit. To Plato it was the embodiment of a pattern in the heavens. To Aristotle "the founder of the



State was the cause of the greatest of goods." <sup>1</sup> To Hobbes it was "that mortall God to which we owe under the Immortal God our peace and defence"; <sup>2</sup> to Hegel "the footstep of God in the world." <sup>3</sup> But phrases like these, particularly in a modern writer like the last, must be taken, not only in relation to special historical circumstances, but in their special context. Hegel seemed to see the very foundations of civilization endangered by the claims of vague anarchical sentimentalism on the one hand and of the Church on the other. In the text he is careful to explain that he is not speaking of particular States or particular institutions, but of the idea—"this real God"—as contrasted with the actual embodiments of it. <sup>4</sup> What the description stands for is the twofold truth that the State is rooted in man's spiritual nature, and that to fulfil its function as the trustee of "the greatest good" it must be master in its own house.

But to admit this is one thing; to claim for the State that it is the ultimate expression of the will to good and the keeper of the conscience of its subjects, and through them of mankind, is quite another. Hegel (to continue an illustration which has special significance at the present time) comes dangerously near this claim in an important passage on International Law, <sup>5</sup> where he maintains that the State *ought* to enthrone the right and that the right ought to have priority in a world like ours, but notes that inasmuch as there is over it no law-court in which the intrinsically right is embodied, this remains a mere "ought," <sup>6</sup> and the State becomes "the absolute power upon earth."

<sup>1</sup> ὁ πρῶτος συστήσας μεγίστων ἀγαθῶν αἰτίας (*Politics*, i. 2).

<sup>2</sup> *Leviathan*, chap. xvii.

<sup>3</sup> *Philosophy of Right*, § 258.

<sup>4</sup> See below.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.* § 330.

<sup>6</sup> Dyde's English translation here inverts the meaning by his translation, "We must here remain by the absolute command." Hegel means we cannot get farther than an "ought." It is curious that in a treatise that derives its chief interest in philosophy from its antagonism to the dualism in Kant between the real and the ideal, the "ought" in this case should be asserted to be without support in the real world.

The claim and the reason for it are of course of the utmost historical significance. Already in Hegel's time the State was awaking to a sense of its responsibility as the "bearer" of the will of the community. Strong democratic States were being formed under whose protection new forms of international intercourse were developing, economic and cultural ties were being established beyond the limits of nation and locality. Since then they have become consolidated with alliances and agreements which, however far short they fall of "law," are the organic filaments out of which a new form of legalized society may at any time spring. This extension of the moral horizon is entirely in harmony with what our own analysis would lead us to expect. We have spoken above of man's interests as a whole, or system, but this must not be understood to mean that they constitute a closed circle. They are as wide as the world. There is nothing in the whole "choir of heaven and the furniture of earth" which is alien to man. "To nothing he comes without a device." And the interest he has in the world necessarily spreads to the people who are the interpreters of it, and thus the interpreters of himself. We are familiar with this in the industrial expansion to a world scale. Capital knows no country. This of itself we know to our cost is not necessarily a check to the spirit of a narrow nationalism.<sup>1</sup> But it cannot remain by itself. With it normally goes interest in world art, science, literature, religion, and therewith also interest in the peoples of whose life they are the manifestation. It is in this way that societies, like individuals, are constantly passing beyond the limits of mere natural affection and finding their true parents

<sup>1</sup> It is the error which writers like the author of *The Great Illusion*, with all their insight into fundamental economic truths, commit to ignore this limitation. The wealth of a nation is only at best a means, and it may be made a means to ambition—the last infirmity of noble nations as of noble individuals. Both wealth and power fail, except accidentally, to unite nations, because they are what we have called merely "like," not really common interests.

and brethren beyond the limits of their own household. To have the capacity for these larger attachments developed in it is the natural right of a nation in the only sense in which our theory admits of natural rights. It is a right conferred by the ideal of what human nature is at its best. Our conclusion, then, is that in so far as the State is the guardian of the right on the part of its citizens to be put in full possession of themselves, its highest function consists precisely in the extension of their interests to what lies beyond itself. In so far as it fails in this respect, whether it be from the backwardness of its own development or from a mistaken idea of what is involved in its own self-interest, it fails to tap the deepest fountain of loyalty, and lacks an essential element of strength. It is true that in a condition of the world in which the guarantee of the maintenance of the level of civilization already attained by a nation consists in its own strength of arms, the development of cosmopolitan interests is seriously obstructed. The suspicion of humanitarianism in all its forms is the most characteristic mark of "militarism." But if what we have said is true, and if the will and conscience of a nation is pledged, not merely to an abstract ideal of perfection, but to a condition of the world which makes its realization possible, the creation of other guarantees can only be a matter of time. With the growth of self-consciousness must come a time when this obstruction will become intolerable, not only to a world whose peaceful development is threatened by the overgrown power of particular States, but to the conscience of these States themselves. When it comes the change will not be a blow, as some seem to think, to the idea of the State. On the contrary, it will offer for the first time the opportunity for whole-hearted devotion on the part of States to the object on which their rights are founded and for rooting themselves anew in the whole-hearted loyalty of their subjects. It is the remarkable stimulus which the present war has given to this political self-consciousness that justifies the hope that we are on the eve of such a renewal.



As the abiding result of the Napoleonic war was the rise of the modern nation-State, which, for the first time, gave freedom to the corporations, civic, religious, industrial, within it to develop in their own way, and by summoning them to their proper service as ministers of a fuller life in their members to renew their strength, so we may hope that the abiding result of the Hohenzollern-Hapsburg war will be the rise of a greater State as the organ of the "Great Society" of mankind which will endow the national State with a like freedom and a like renewal. "We are grieved," says an American writer,<sup>1</sup> "not because democracy has given the nation much power but because it has endowed it with too little conscience." This is well said, but it is well to add that in the world as we know it to-day the national conscience is weak because the nation is divided against itself in that which is the deepest source of its strength. Man and mammon are as opposed in politics as God and mammon in religion, and the condition of the addition of all other things to the State is that it should seek first the kingdom of Man.

<sup>1</sup> *Atlantic Monthly*, December 1916.

## CHAPTER V

### CITIZENSHIP AND PERSONALITY

#### § 1. THE GOOD CITIZEN AND THE GOOD MAN.

IN the previous lectures we have tried to establish an organic connection between individual and society. Not only is there an actual dependence of the one upon the other, but organized society as representing the conditions under which alone the best that is in human nature can reach fruition has a claim on our loyalty of the same nature and authority as the claim of conscience itself. To deny one's citizenship is to deny one's humanity. But with this attempt to identify the good of the man with the good of the citizen, have we not, it may be asked, proved too much? Already in a well-known passage in the *Politics*<sup>1</sup> Aristotle raises the question whether the virtue of the good man is the same as the virtue of the good citizen. But as yet the idea of individuality was imperfectly developed, and he fails to pursue the question to its real issue. To-day it is different. The growth of modern civilization has meant a growing emphasis on the value of the individual. Even in countries where the community has received exaggerated emphasis this is fully recognized. "Modern culture," writes Eucken, "favours a high estimate of individual qualities and seeks to develop them most fully." With this, Aristotle's question receives a new significance, seeing that the qualities that make for the ideal citizen seem to be brought

<sup>1</sup> Book iii. 4.

into antagonism with those that make for the ideal man. To be a person means to be oneself and not another. It implies a concentration of power at a particular centre, and the expression of it in a form which is one's own. If society were a mere collection of such points each concentrating material in itself, there would be little difficulty. Citizenship would mean merely doing this under the limits of an environment of other similar centres. But this is just the view we have denied. Society means a real unity of purpose, and citizenship, therefore, involves a reversal of this centralization in a process of self-expansion and the acceptance of the canalized forms of belief and action that society imposes. To be a citizen is to merge one's being in that of others. Society has, of course, something to contribute to personality in the restraint of the cruder passions which mean danger to ourselves and others. This may be worth the sacrifice, but sacrifice there is. We give of our will and personality to the community, not to have them returned to us with interest, but in order to receive them back in the small change of security of person and property. For the rest, whatever beyond this we achieve in culture we achieve by our own efforts, and in a field which is our own making and not provided by the organization we find. "The collective existence of the race," writes Pestalozzi, "can only civilize it. It cannot cultivate it."<sup>1</sup> Not in our relations to others, but in ourselves lie the roots of our strength and individuality. The strongest man is not he who leans most on society, but, in Ibsen's words, "the man who stands most alone."

## § 2. THE MEANING OF SOCIALITY.

In trying to face this difficulty, we may begin by noting, in the light of what has been already said, the misunderstanding as to the meaning of sociality which underlies

<sup>1</sup> "An die Unschuld, den Ernst und den Edelmuth meines Zeitalters und meines Vaterlands" (*Werke Seyffarth*, xii. 152).



the above statement of it. Socialization, it is assumed, means the *transference* of forms of action, feeling, and belief from one member of the group to another by imitation, instinctive or intentional—in other words the assimilation of the one by the many. It is further assumed that it means assimilation to a *particular* given *form* of society. We have seen reason to believe that both of these assumptions require to be modified in view of what is implied in the social mind and will.

With reference to the first we have seen that, just as it is a mistake to look for the essence of habit in mere assimilation of present to past action, so it is a mistake to look for the essence of sociality in the mere assimilation of individual to collective modes of thought and action. Custom, we have seen, exercises an enormous force even at the most advanced stages of civilization. But even where it is at its strongest it is only the external form of the action of society. Looked at from its inner side and its actual working in the mind of the individual, social life is never mere imitation or the reproduction of other minds and wills, but the response called forth by the circumstances of the moment in a being who has the power of entering into a common purpose and adapting his actions to it. At a certain stage in his development it appears as his "duty." It is something he *owes* to society, but it is the duty of his *station*, it is something *owed*, one might say, to himself in this particular position. We can afford to press the analogy of habit. However bound down by his habits he may be, a man is never a mere repetition of the routine of yesterday. Even Mr. Podsnap's routine is new to him every morning; as compared with a machine he is a being of large discourse, looking before and behind. He can put things "behind him." In the same way we may insist that, however he is bound down to society, a man's routine is his own. It is something that suits him and in the fulfilment of which he finds himself (however *borné* the self may be). As we must again insist, all real society is co-operation, the

embodiment of an idea or universal in a particular form determined by one's place in a whole. Where co-operation ceases and mere imitation begins, there is an end to sociality—to all that makes a man a *socius* in any real sense of the word.

With reference to the second of the above assumptions, a similar distinction must be made. We have seen that there is a difference in the ends with which the will identifies itself. There is honour among thieves. But it is a different kind of honour from the honour of a community of Quakers, bent on social reform or religious inspiration. And with this goes a difference in the degree of sociality implied in the common purpose. "Socialisation," writes Mr. MacIver, "does not mean reduction to any given social type. It would be absurd, for instance, to regard the man who carelessly accepts and reflects the existent social order as more socialized than the man who spends his life in an earnest endeavour to improve social conditions; or, again, to regard the completest pirate in a community of pirates as not less socialized than the completest patriot in a community of patriots."<sup>1</sup> And the reason, as we have seen, is that the patriot and the reformer have entered far more fully into the real end of society. They reflect more fully the will whose object is the creation of the conditions which make for fullness of life and thus, as the same writer puts it, have their being rooted far more profoundly in society. After what has already been said, it is unnecessary to insist further on this. We have now to approach the same subject from the side of the individual to see whether the closer consideration of what we mean by individuality may not lead us to a similar expansion of its meaning.

### § 3. INDIVIDUALITY IN GENERAL.

Taking it in the generic sense of which the human individuality we call personality is a species, we have to

<sup>1</sup> *Community*, p. 215.

note in the first place the two implications of the term and in the second the ambiguity which attaches to each of them. What is individual, as the derivation suggests, is one and indivisible<sup>1</sup>; what is individual is clearly marked off by internal marks from everything else: it is unique and *sui generis*. But when we come to ask wherein these attributes of unity and uniqueness severally consist, we find ourselves in a difficulty. If to be one is to be indivisible, it seems natural to seek for it in the absence of all parts. A thing can only be safe from division which has retired into an inner circle of pure selfhood. It is along this line that physical science has sought for the ultimate constituents of matter and been led to the "solid simplicity" of the Lucretian atom. Similarly with regard to uniqueness. As there is a temptation to look for unity in mere self-identity, so there is a temptation to look for uniqueness in mere difference from others and independence of them. To be unique is to be singular, and to be singular is to be separate and self-contained. But if we try to follow out these definitions, we find it difficult to give them a meaning consistent with themselves or with one another. If we take unity in the sense of absence of all parts, we have reduced the thing we call "individual" to a characterless point, and thus robbed it of any nature at all. It is no wonder that physics has been led to the denial of any unity of this kind.<sup>2</sup> There is a similar inconsistency in our use of "uniqueness." By interpreting it as mere difference and independence, we cut the thing off from vital connection with anything else. Difference becomes indifference. Everything else is indifferent to it and it to them; there is no reason why we should assign it uniqueness or any predicate at all. It is simply the non-existent as far as anything else is concerned. From this it follows as a corollary that unity and uniqueness

<sup>1</sup> Quod dirimi distrahivē non possit (*Cic. de Nat. Deorum*, iii. chap. 12, which seems to be the first time the word occurs as a noun).

<sup>2</sup> *Cic. op. cit.* i. chap. 23 declares *nihil esse individuum potest*.



are incompatible with each other. True the atom or point occupies a place which excludes every other, but this is an attribute that is shared by every other and does not mark it out as unique. *Vice versa* if we start from a uniqueness which consists in mere difference, this must consist in an attribute or arrangement of attributes that differentiates it; and either of these involves internal division, the first of the thing and its attributes, the second of the attributes, which destroys its unity.

From this hornet's nest of logical inconsistencies we can only extricate ourselves by returning on our steps, and seeking for the unity and uniqueness which we agree constitute individuality in an entirely different direction.

The mistake with regard to the *unity* was to look for it in the exclusion of parts instead of in the power of the thing to hold its parts together as elements in a whole. If we are to look for a type of this in the physical world, we may find it, perhaps, in the modern conception of the electron of the physicist or the biophore of the biologist. What gives these structures their unity is, not the exclusion of parts, but the penetration of the parts by a common principle or life; what threatens it is, not the possession of parts, but the inclusion in it of any secretion or excrescence impervious to the dominating principle of the whole. What is true of unity is true, *mutatis mutandis*, of *uniqueness*. What makes a thing unique in any sense in which it is worth while to claim uniqueness is, not that it is "singular" in the sense of being separable from other things, but that it focuses at a particular point and responds to the forces, physical, chemical or vital, which we call its environment in such a way that at the same time it maintains its own nature, and is an essential part of the whole within which these act. What threatens this kind of uniqueness is, not any resemblance to other things or dependence upon them, but any inertness that spells failure to respond to the stimulus of the environment.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> To try to maintain individuality by keeping some one quality or group of qualities immutably fixed would be as if a stone (to

Before turning to the question of personality, we may note one or two corollaries that seem to follow from the above analysis. If what has been said of the meaning of individuality is true, it would seem in the first place that *it is not an attribute conferred on a thing once and for all*. It does not consist in the native endowments, the "inherited architecture," of a thing (this is only the raw material of individuality), but rather in the use which is made of it. Like the foam on the crest of a wave, individuality lives in movement. In Aristotle's phrase it is an energy or actualization of potentialities achieved, not by withdrawing into the recesses of isolated being, but by the give and take which is the law of life. In the second place, *individuality is something that is achieved in various degrees and possesses various values, not according to the degree of a thing's dissimilarity from other things or its independence of them, but according to the range of its power to focalize and assimilate*. In this sense a plant is more individual than a crystal, an animal than a plant. Individuality, in other words, proceeds along the lines, not of the exclusion but of the inclusion of what comes to it from without. Finally, we can see how on this interpretation *unity and uniqueness, instead of being in contradiction to each other, are only different sides of the same character*. For a thing to be one is to have the power to dominate and subdue the elements which go to constitute it, and this power is at once means and result of the active response to a precisely determined situation—exactly that in which we have seen its uniqueness consists.

#### § 4. PERSONALITY.

If with the clue furnished by this account of the meaning of individuality in general we return to the question of adopt Nettleship's apologue *Lectures and Philosophical Remains*, i. 36) were to refuse to admit that it could have any other centre of gravity than that which it had in any particular place and position, and were to bewail its loss of individuality when it found itself upside down in a new place.

the meaning of personality, it is unnecessary to dwell upon the error of looking for it in some private centre of pure selfhood. Personality is merely that form of individuality, as above defined, which is rendered possible by the possession of mind and will. To be a person is to be one and indivisible, but it is a unity that is achieved, not by the suppression of natural instincts, temperament, and capacities, but by the permeation of them with a common spirit—the power of finding freedom, not *from* them but *in* them. We have heard a great deal in recent psychology of multiple personality. We are all multiple persons in the sense that natural and acquired interests alternately bid for and, under particular circumstances, succeed in obtaining exclusive control over us. On the other hand, personality in the sense we are speaking of consists in the command over them which is achieved by their subordination to some central and inclusive interest. It is vain to look for personality except in the dominance and continuity of a conscious purpose. The essence of its unity is concentration, but it is a concentration which not only leaves room for diversity of elements, but gives them a place, stamping them with a new meaning in the life of the whole. If we ask how this concentration is achieved, the answer is, not by turning inwards to some secret and private source of power, but by absorption in some outward object sufficient to call forth all our energies. Personality is no cloistered virtue. It resembles the talent which, as Goethe tells us, unlike genius, is developed, not in the silence of the soul (though of course this has its place), but “in the stream of the world.” The test of its strength is, not the energy of its resistance to everything which comes to it from without, but its power of focusing and reflecting in the form of human mind and will what comes to it as a diffused outward presence, whether of truth, beauty, or good.

The same result is reached from the side of uniqueness. As in the case of individuality in general, it is a mistake to look for the essence of personality in what merely



separates a man from his environment of other selves. On the contrary, it depends on the degree in which he is able to enter into the deeper needs of others and embody them in his thought and action. In an old sense of the word he is their representative.<sup>1</sup> It is in this sense we speak of great personalities or great individualities. "A great individuality," says Nettleship, "is a person in whom universal humanity has reached a very high degree of development or differentiation; one who concentrates in himself a great deal of human nature; a person therefore of many sides, who is very 'representative' and touches others at innumerable points."<sup>2</sup> True such a person is unique in the sense of being unlike everybody else, but his uniqueness comes as a secondary result, partly of his many-sidedness, partly of his concentration on his own particular work in his own place and time. As the individuality in thought that we call originality has been defined as consisting, not in thinking differently from other people, but in thinking for oneself, so the individuality of action we call personality consists, not in acting differently from other people, but in acting for oneself.

From this follow similar corollaries to those which we noted above. We can see how we gain only an imperfect idea of personality by conceiving it, as some educational writers habitually do, as consisting in the natural differences of temperament, capacity, or interest in the child. We have no desire to depreciate the importance of these natural endowments. They are the nucleus of all that the child has in him to become—all that enables him to enter into fruitful relations with his environment. But what it is of importance to note is that they are only the starting-point, the material which has to be moulded into the form of an individual human being, and that this form is realized, not in aloofness from the life of other individuals, but in finding within this life a field that will give these capacities the fullest scope.

<sup>1</sup> The "parson" was the representative man.

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.* p. 160.

We can see, too, how personality admits of various degrees. The author of *Autocrat of the Breakfast Table* speaks of the man who has only enough soul to keep him from going on all fours. Ben Jonson could speak of Shakespeare as "the soul of his age." In so far as we conceive of God as a person it cannot be in the sense of a mind that excludes other minds, but only of a mind to whom the whole universe is open, "from whom no secrets are hid," in whom therefore His creatures can see the light of all things clearly. It is only in this way, finally, that we can do full justice to the negative factor in individuality that has been the source of so much misunderstanding. For we can see that it is just in proportion to the degree in which anything can separate between itself and its environment that it can reassert its union with it and, as we have said, *reflect* it. A plant opposes its life to the world about it in a way an inorganic thing fails to do, making possible a reassimilation with it. On the other hand, in its indifference to others, even its own offspring, the plant fails of any higher kind of individuality. With the possession of soul in the animal comes the extension of the possibility of antagonism to its own kind, but with this also the possibility of reunion in family and herd. By reason of his self-consciousness the power in man of self-separation is infinitely extended. There is nothing indifferent to him, nothing which he may not make his enemy. But with this universal power of opposition comes the power of universal reunion on a new plane of art and science, society and religion, in which he recognizes his universe as the field of an infinite self-affirmation and for the first time becomes truly a person in a world of responsive persons.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Eastern thought has been accused of neglecting the element of difference and separation in human personality. It is all the more striking to have it recognized and set in so fine a light by Sir Rabindranath Tagore. "The consciousness of relationship dawned in us with our physical existence, when there was separation and meeting between our individual life and the universal

## § 5. DEMOCRACY AND PERSONALITY.

We have approached the question of the relation between citizenship and personality from opposite sides with the view of showing that as we follow each out it leads to the other. But if the argument amounts to establishing their identity, again it may be urged it has proved too much, and that the conclusion arrived at is contradicted at once by the facts of history, by the voice of ordinary practice and common sense, and in the long run also by philosophy itself. Is it not, it may be asked, the common verdict that with the growth of social sentiment and democratic forms of civil life there is ever greater pressure exercised by the multitude on the individual, with the result that thought, feeling, and action are reduced to a dead level of acquiescent mediocrity? Or, passing over this, does there not remain—e.g. in education—the choice between the two ideals, and will it not make all the difference which of them we take as our guiding principle? A short consideration of the relation of what has been said to democracy and education may serve to indicate the bearing of our conclusions upon practice.

The first of these objections represents a well-known reaction in minds themselves permeated with democratic sympathy, which, whether it takes the form of Mill's book on *Liberty* or Spencer's *Man versus the State*, seems to see in the growing power of public opinion a menace to independence of judgment and action. This is not the place to criticize his line of argument as a whole.<sup>1</sup> It will be sufficient to call attention to one or two of

world of things; it took a deeper line in our mental life, when there was a separation and continual union between our individual mind and the universal world of reason; it widened when there was a separation and continuation between the individual will and the universal will of human personalities; it came to its ultimate meaning when there was a separation and harmony between the individual one in us and the universal One in infinity" (*Personality* (1917), p. 84).

<sup>1</sup> For a fuller treatment see Part II.



the main features of it. It is to be noticed, in the first place, that it comes from writers who in the main are identified with the older individualistic view, and proceeds on the assumption of a natural opposition between what we might call social and individual solidarity. If we start from a point of view which puts all the vitality on the side of the individual and all the fixity and inertia on the side of social organization, it is not surprising that the growth of democracy should seem to be an alarming feature of our age. This perhaps was less a matter of surprise at a time when the chief historical instance of the growth of sociality was the French Republic, which enabled the genius of the French nation for graceful forms of corporate life for the first time fully to assert itself. But it is not too much to say that modern developments, both on this and the other side of the Atlantic, have largely falsified this historical generalization, no less than they have falsified the philosophical theory it was thought to support. It would indeed be strange if it were otherwise. The growth of democracy means, in terms of our analysis, the extension of the domain of will and intelligence over that of instinct and custom and a higher power of response in the corporate mind. Government by discussion, as Bagehot puts it, has taken the place of government by authority. If in particular instances the response has taken the form of the endeavour, whether conscious or unconscious, to establish common standards of life and thought, this must be attributed to national temperament and historical circumstances rather than to the growth of democracy itself. Certain it is that the most democratic community of the ancient world was the one which on any fair judgment must be credited with the most plenteous growth of startling individualities,<sup>1</sup> and the democracy which to-day is of the

<sup>1</sup> The view that attributes the banishment of Anaxagoras and Protagoras and the judicial murder of Socrates, not to speak of the ostracism of Aristides and others, to Athenian intolerance is now generally abandoned. From the first it was hampered by the difficulty of explaining how these men came to be there at all.

widest extent and the greatest complexity of structure has hitherto only meant additional opportunity for the display of strong personality. Such, at any rate, is the view of the most thoughtful of American writers themselves. Augmenting numbers and organization, they tell us, so far from obscuring the salient individual, only make for him a larger theatre of success. "To imagine that the mass will submerge the individual," writes Professor Cooley,<sup>1</sup> "is to suppose that one aspect of society will stand still while the other grows. It rests on a superficial numerical way of thinking, which regards individuals as fixed units, each of which must become less conspicuous the more they are multiplied. But if the man of genius represents a spiritual principle, his influence is not fixed but grows with the growth of life itself and is limited only by the vitality of what he stands for." The contention of this lecture could not be better expressed than in these last words. Personality is merely the point where the vitality of which society is the great repository condenses and manifests itself in triumphant form, and it would be strange indeed if the strength of societies and that of the personalities which is fed from it were in inverse proportion to each other.

#### § 6. PERSONALITY AS A PRACTICAL IDEAL.

The question, however, remains whether as a matter of practice, and particularly of educational practice, the two ideals of personality and citizenship do not offer themselves as alternatives between which we have to choose. May there not be a danger, it may be asked, in the attempt to apply philosophical generalities to ordinary practice? "All truth," Mr. Bosanquet<sup>2</sup> has said, "which has any

<sup>1</sup> *Social Organization*, pp. 161-2. The writer seems, however, to fail to distinguish with sufficient clearness the mere increase of numbers—what Mr. Bosanquet has called the "collective hard fact"—from the increase of general intelligence and the opportunity to use it for the organization of life—the "collective mind."

<sup>2</sup> *Social and International Ideals*, p. 43.

touch of thoroughness has its danger for practice. It must be many-sided; and what is many-sided is always liable to be wrongly grasped and is quite easy to caricature. Great truths are great forces, and great forces are apt to be dangerous." He adds, however, that this is not an argument for neglecting them in practice, but for handling them attentively and with precision.

We have already seen how the words "sociality" and "individuality" as commonly used are a standing invitation to misunderstanding. For the moment the latter is in the ascendant. Under the fascination of it there has grown up a cant of personality against which it is well to be put on our guard, sure though it is to bring its own revenge.<sup>1</sup>

All this is profoundly true, but we shall make a mistake if we think we shall fare better by going to the other extreme

<sup>1</sup> This has been so happily exposed by Mr. H. G. Wells in a recent penetrating psychological study that perhaps no apology is needed for quoting the passage at length:—

"'America,'" says Cecily to Mr. Direck, her lover, "'overdoes the development of personalities altogether. Whatever else is wrong about America, that is where America is most clearly wrong.' I read that this morning, and directly I read it I thought, 'Yes, that's exactly it! Mr. Direck is overdoing the development of personalities.'"

"Me!"

"Yes. I like talking to you, and I don't like talking to you. And I see now it is because you keep on talking of my Personality and your Personality. That makes me uncomfortable. It's like having some one following me about with a limelight. . . . I find myself trying to be what you have told me I am—sort of acting myself. I want to glance at looking-glasses to see if I am keeping it up. It's just exactly what Mr. Britling says in his book about American women. They act themselves, he says; they get a kind of story and explanation about themselves and they are always trying to make it perfectly plain and clear to every one. Well, when you do that, you can't think nicely of other things."

"We like a clear light in people," said Mr. Direck.

"We don't. I suppose we are shadier," said Cecily. "One can't help the feeling that one is in the world for something more than oneself" (*Mr. Britling Sees it Through*, p. 146).



and for the cant of personality substitute the cant of citizenship. This doubtless has the advantage of pointing outwards to objective ends in which the self may be lost, but it is none the less an abstraction if it be taken to mean civic work in the narrow sense of the word. Even when we have corrected this one-sidedness by substituting Mr. Bradley's phrase, "my station and its duties," it must fail unless the "station" is read in the light of the whole system of values, among them the value of the soul itself, to which the station ministers and which gives it significance. Mr. Bradley tries to correct this one-sidedness by reminding us that a man's place or station in society only has spiritual value for him in so far as it makes him conscious of the larger world of which it is a part—in so far as

. . . through the place he sees  
A place is signified he never saw,  
But, if he lack not soul, may learn to know.<sup>1</sup>

It is this truth we require to be reminded of in education.

We shall have occasion to deal with education as a social institution in a future chapter.<sup>2</sup> It concerns us here as the field in which the two ideals we are discussing are apt to come into the most direct conflict. So long as educational theory and practice were dominated, as in the ancient world, by the idea of the city, in the mediæval by the idea of heaven, the problem remained in abeyance. The modern world (almost our own time) has witnessed the rise of the idea, as regards the child, of a disinterested education, pledged to the development of the capacities of the individual and, as regards the teacher, of the idea of freedom to stamp his own individual impress on his work. It is because of these ideas that the right apprehension of the antithesis becomes a matter of vital importance. The moral of the present chapter is that we shall fail of all

<sup>1</sup> Quoted from Browning's "Red Cotton Nightcap Country" in this connexion (*Ethical Studies*, p. 183).

<sup>2</sup> Chapter X.

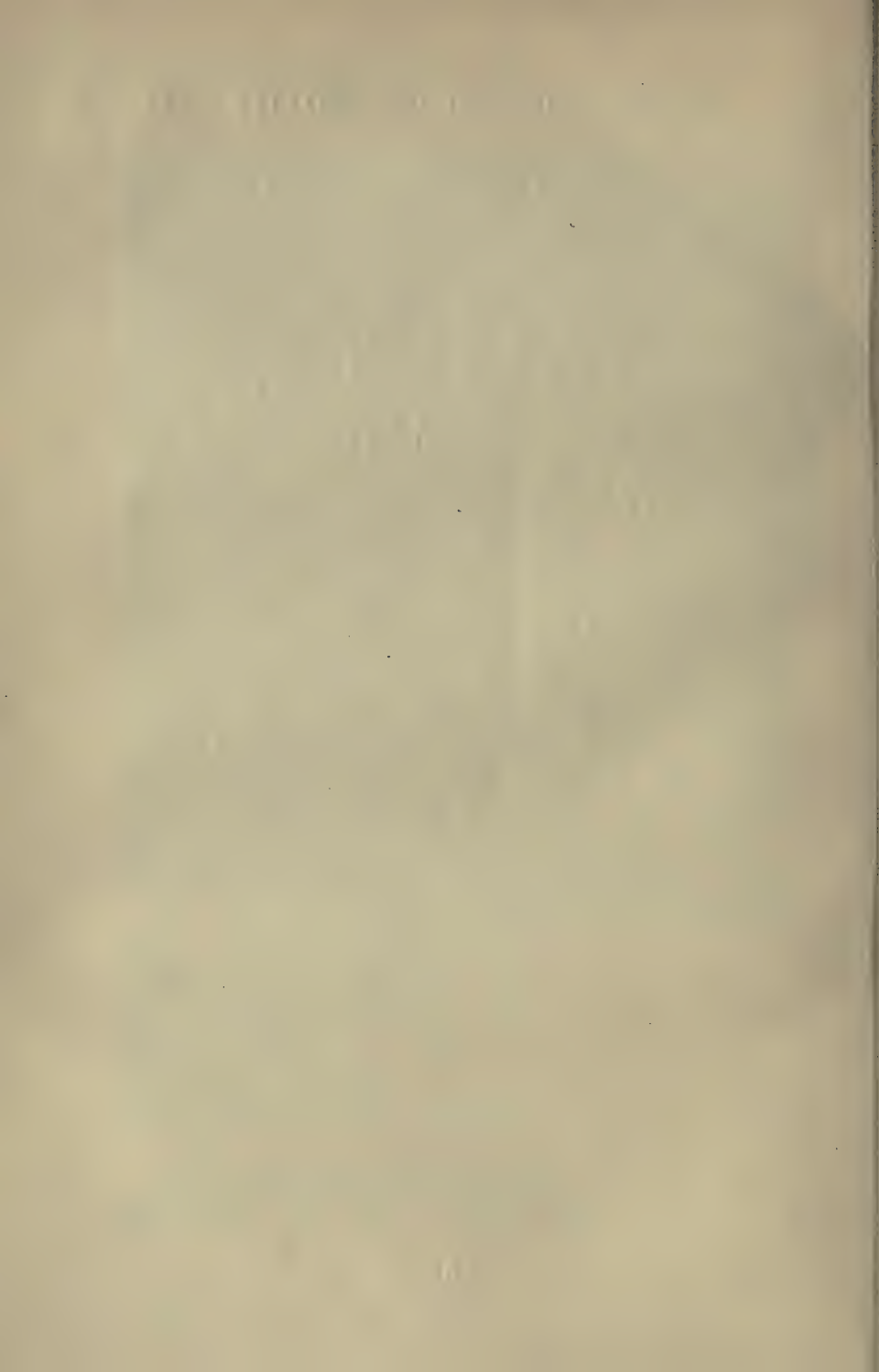
fruitful application of these ideas if we interpret individuality in the sense either of mere peculiarities of natural endowment or of something essentially mysterious and free from the admixture of foreign ingredients. Any such reading is apt to take revenge for the wrong that is done it from the side of the child by directing attention to laboratory tests of faculties—useful enough as a measure of growth in such as can be tested, inevitably the less significant ones, but throwing no light on general method; from the side of the teacher by attaching exaggerated importance to his “personality,” to the neglect of school organization and systematic instruction in carefully selected and graduated studies. The correction in both cases is to be found in the considerations we have been urging. We have to recognize that, whatever else personality means in the child, it has its roots in the regulation and harmonious adjustment of his appetites and untrained impulses and passions, and that there is no way of effecting this end save through the self-organization that comes from inspiring contact with objects that appeal to the deeper elements in his own nature. It is coming to be recognized by educational writers<sup>1</sup> that in the development of mental faculty the only effective method is the indirect one of the inward organization that comes from self-directed attention to a subject of intrinsic interest, and that we are beating the air when we seek to effect it by the attempt to work directly on the will as an innate power. The same principle holds of the development of moral personality. This is something to be achieved, and it can only be achieved by the self-organization that comes from interest in some object that takes the child out of himself into the larger world of social purposes. Moreover, in the one case as in the other, when success has come, and he has been put in possession of some portion of himself, this manifests itself, not in activities which are

<sup>1</sup> See the excellent treatment of this subject in Professor Dewey's *Educational Essays*, chap. ii., “Interest in Relation to the Training of the Will.”

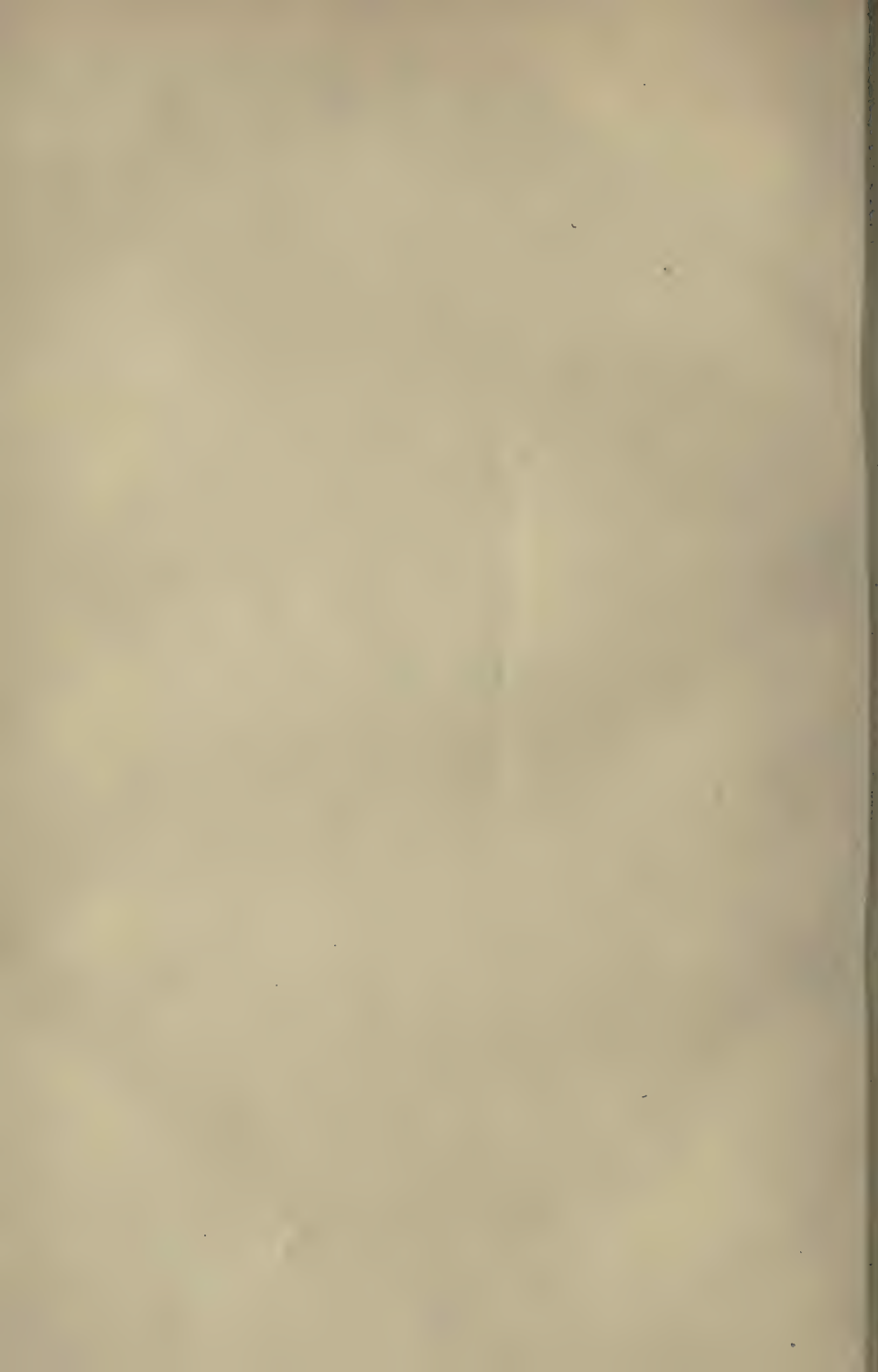
his own in any sense that separates him from the world without, but in such as unite him more closely to it. His personality consists in a system of points of contact and not of repulsion—in the power of reflecting and interpreting a will that lies beyond the merely personal rather than in the assertion of one that is within. Not less important is the corollary from the side of the teacher. We agree that the vital element in all teaching is the personality of the teacher. But this is no mysterious inner light, far less particular idiosyncrasies or peculiarities of his own which he seeks to communicate to his pupils. The substance of it is the ideas which dominate him in his daily life, and the value of it comes from the fullness and exactitude with which these ideas reflect the real nature of the world he is there to interpret to the child. It is this substance which he seeks to communicate, and he will succeed just in proportion as all that is merely particular to himself has fallen out of view, and he is more concerned with the powers that influence him than with his own power of influencing others. It was this kind of personality that his friends recognized in the great Oxford teacher from whom we have quoted above when they wrote of him: "He loved great things and thought little of himself: desiring neither fame nor influence, he won the devotion of men and was a power in their lives, and seeking no disciples, he taught to many the greatness of the world and man's mind."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Memoir of R. L. Nettleship*, op. cit. i. lvi;





## PART II





## CHAPTER VI

### SOCIAL INSTITUTIONS

#### § 1. INTRODUCTORY.

Up to this point we have discussed the nature of Society and of man's relation to it. We have seen that man is from the beginning a social creature, and that it is through the moulding influence of social forces that he comes to the knowledge and realization of his own powers. What he is in himself, the varied capacity latent in his nature, can unfold itself only in an environment that sustains and trains him. Man becomes individualized when he gathers into himself the ideas and feelings, the emotions and habits of action which inspire the world in which he lives. Without them, he is a bare potentiality, and dies as a plant torn from its mother-earth decays into wilting barrenness. At the lowest level of his existence, man needs the co-operation of others for his merely physical survival, and his dependence on Society grows with every uplift of his life. Nothing that belongs to the nobler reaches of the human spirit, nothing that is characteristic of man as man can be attained without either the stimulus or the help of concerted association with others. Indeed, it is in his higher activities that the perfection of commonalty is reached. For if the provision of the means of satisfaction for the ordinary wants of physical life demands co-operative effort, too often in the distribution of that provision there is competition and conflict. What is mine is not thine, what is thine is not mine. But in the region of spiritual

satisfaction this exclusiveness disappears. "Mine" and "thine" are no longer terms of division and separation; for in religion, in art, in literature, in all those activities which we rightly regard as specially human, satisfaction and attainment are increased by being shared. Nearly everything for which man lives can be won and enjoyed only through membership of a civilized society. "What is it in the last resort that distinguishes between a wealthy man's command of the wide world's commodities to-day, and the shivering, hunger-haunted nakedness of the lake-dweller; or between the low-browed, half-animal cunning, the crude and cruel passions of the cave man, and the soul which wears righteousness as a robe and intelligence as a diadem, and which is sensitive to the beauty and meaning of the world, and devoted to its good? What is it that has intervened, except the continuous, ever recreated 'Mortal God,' which we call 'Human Society'? . . . It first broke the slumber of the soul, awakened its wants, and sent it on its way aspiring and learning the nature of the good it needs. And by a dual process it forms us and we form it at the same time. We are makers of the social world which itself makes us. There is a borrowing and lending of life on both sides, and the marvel and miracle never cease." <sup>1</sup>

How, then, does this interplay of individual and society take place? Society is not a simple thing, nor is its constitution precisely laid down and defined. The social world of one man is not the same as the social world of another, though the two may live side by side every day of their span of years. One man's environment is larger, more varied, more full of interest than another's. He means more to it, and it to him. And this because the relationship is reciprocal. If it is true that Society makes man, it is as true that man makes Society. This essential fact we must always bear in mind in thinking of Society—that its relation to individuals is two-sided. It is creative and created. It shapes the characters of men, and yet

<sup>1</sup> *Social Powers* (Sir Henry Jones, pp. 27-8).

in all its forms it is brought into being and maintained by their activity. It is, and it is what it is, ultimately because they will it so. Hence when we ask what Society is, we find that it is no single thing, but diverse and multitudinous. It is my world and your world and the worlds of all who live beside us. It is the vast aggregate of influences and institutions which make up the civilization that has formed our personalities, and fashioned our lives, and which we, on the other hand, carry on and sustain.

We can, however, specify a great number of its constituent parts, and describe the relation of these to ourselves and to one another. And in doing this, we are really specifying simply a number of other and, for the most part, smaller societies, or as we may call them for the sake of clearness, "institutions." An institution is not synonymous with Society. The word in its wider sense stands, not only for a form of social union, but for the modes or organs through which forms of Society operate. In this sense we may speak of law, religion, education, even war as institutions apart from any organization which aims at giving effect to them. In this sense Mr. Maciver<sup>1</sup> can speak of institutions as organized forms of social activity created by associations: to which we would add that not only do associations create institutions in this sense, but in turn are created by them as the family may rise out of private property, the army out of war.<sup>2</sup> But disregarding this wider sense for the present, it is important to realize that what we have found to be true of Society in general is in principle true of its constituent parts. An institution is a special society—"a meeting-point of wills." It is an organization, created and sustained by individual wills, and equally creating and sustaining them. Will always seeks to realize some purpose; it acts to attain some end. Hence an institution as the creation of will is an objectified purpose, the embodiment in external form of an end which some

<sup>1</sup> *Community*, p. 150, *et seq.*

<sup>2</sup> Mr. Maciver, of course, recognizes this when he emphasizes the reaction of institutions upon associations,



group of individuals has proposed to itself. A family, a Church, a trade union, a University, a social club, a State,—each of these is an institution, the outcome of the mind and will of men.

## § 2. DIFFERENT TYPES OF INSTITUTIONS.

Institutions, then, are plainly of very various sorts. Some the individual may be said to be born into ; others he is almost compelled to join through social pressure ; of others again, he becomes a member if he so pleases ; while of certain others he is a member whether he likes it or not. The family is an instance of the first kind ; a trade union, either openly so called or in the form of a close professional corporation, of the second ; a social club of the third, and the State of the last. If we care to describe these different types in terms of our analysis in Part I, we may speak of instinct as prominent in the first, the pressure of social custom in the second, will and conscious direction in the third and fourth. Or again, looking to the end, we might distinguish as the *τέλος* of the first the continuation of the race, of the second and third the maintenance and self-development of the individual, and of the fourth the harmony and unity of the whole. But all such distinctions, as we shall see, are merely relative, and the attempt to keep them separate has been the fruitful source of error in political philosophy. What it is important to emphasize is that these differences between institutions correspond, roughly, to the differences in the seriousness of the purposes embodied in them. It is because it matters more to the individual and to the community that he should be a member of a trade union than that he should play cricket that pressure is brought to bear on him in one case and not in the other. It is because, for individual and social life as we know it, it is essential that men should be members of civilized States that the social economy of the world makes such membership inevitable for him. At first look there is something

paradoxical in speaking of an institution of which membership is compulsory. We have just argued that an institution is purposive, that it is sustained by the volition of its members. And surely a purpose is something which a man sets before himself and chooses freely. So that the first condition of genuine institutional life would appear to be freedom of choice and spontaneous devotion. But here we seem to speak of an institution which a man cannot but accept—i.e. of a purpose which he does not choose, but has imposed upon him. But this paradox is only one form of the double character of all institutions to which we have already referred. Institutions are the creation of will, but also its creator; and as there are certain fundamental conditions without which man cannot rise to the possession of a will, so there are certain institutions, embodying these conditions, which are the necessary media of man's participation in institutional life. There are some purposes, and therefore some institutions, which belong to the nature of the human spirit; and these the individual must accept if he would come to know his own will or to the possession of his own individuality. After all, the situation is not unique. Membership of the physical world imposes certain conditions on man, certain first necessities which, if he is to live, he cannot evade. He must eat, drink, and sleep; and we do not think it strange that the natural world subjects him to compulsion of that kind. So it is with Society. There are certain first necessities of the spiritual life, certain conditions which we must accept, if we are to be human and civilized; and these Society lays upon us in the form of a compulsion. The constraint upon us is different in degree, but hardly different in kind. For if we cannot refuse the physical conditions except at the peril of our physical lives, we cannot refuse the spiritual except at the peril of our spiritual existence. It may be easier wilfully to forfeit spiritual than physical life—at least, it may be thought so. But both acts are alike irrational—i.e. foreign to the nature of man.

## § 3. PURPOSE IN INSTITUTIONAL LIFE.

If, then, the fundamental character of all institutions is that they are objectified purposes, what is the meaning of this act of objectification? It seems to be twofold. By this act the purpose is brought, if not to attainment, at least to the situation in which attainment is possible; and, secondly, it acquires a stability and security in the economy of men's lives. Suppose, e.g., we watch the formation of any simple institution—say of a District Sick Nursing Association. It is easy to see what is involved here. Some public-spirited person or group of persons feels that there is a deficiency in the equipment of the neighbourhood. Poor people are suffering unnecessarily for want of skilled help in sickness. It occurs to him, and he mentions it to others, that it would be an easy matter to provide that help if the members of the community chose to contribute each a small sum towards the payment of a nurse. Whenever any measure of popular support is gained for the idea, the thing is done—the association is formed to collect and administer the funds, the nurse is appointed, and the organization is in working order. What then, does this amount to? First, as we suggested, the purpose for which the institution was founded is fulfilled, or at least has the conditions of its fulfilment established. And in the second place, this purpose has been given a definite and well-understood place in the life of the community. Once the organization has been established, it is more difficult to forget the need that has called it forth. It becomes part of the normal apparatus of the district, and every member expects as part of his ordinary outlay to make his appropriate contribution to it. The institution is the product of common will, and could not survive the decay of that will. If the will to maintain it languishes, or public interest fails, the institution dies. On the other hand, the institution itself serves to create the will to keep it in being. More than that, it educates the will; i.e. once



the community is stirred to perceive this need and to give it a permanent place in its life, it naturally goes on to see other requirements for which it might well make similar provision. It may go on to establish a hospital, or perhaps turn its attention to infant welfare, or to the survey of all the matters relating to public health in the neighbourhood. Such a movement, indeed, is precisely what we should expect; for, as we saw in Part I, will has a logic of its own, which so long as there is life in it, secures its own self-development. The principle of progress lies in the will itself.

All this, of course, is very simple and elementary. And yet it illustrates the double relationship of individual and institution which is the central principle of all social theory and practice. There is a further stage in the evolution of an institution when it receives statutory or legal embodiment in the form of a public service. The State or the municipality may take over the duty of making such a provision as we have just considered, and the institution is apparently no longer voluntary. It seems to have become something comparatively rigid and independent of the active co-operation of those who initiated it. This stage we shall discuss later, and try to show that our analysis holds good here as well as at the simpler stage, and that the double relationship is still maintained. Meantime, it is sufficient here to see the relationship as the motive of all institutional life.

Perhaps without too great a stretch of analogy, we might illustrate the place of institutions in the development of social life by the part which books play in the development of intellectual life. A mathematician, e.g., works out some important thesis in connection with one of the higher branches of his subject. He embodies the results of his researches in a book; plainly mind and will have gone to the creation of it. More than that, only if the reader puts his mind and will into the book does it mean anything to him. Without that the book remains dead to him; and if the time comes when no one throws an effort into

the understanding of the book, the book is as dead as if it did not exist. It lives only in the minds of those who read it, and in the influence it exerts on them. But, on the other side, like an institution, it is educative. Not only does the discipline of writing the book fit the mathematician for further researches—as the effort to create an institution lifts the will of the community to a point at which further ascents become possible—but in so far as the book goes to form an accepted part of the intellectual environment of the time, other men reach the level that it represents and are able to advance from that. It conserves the progress that has been made, and makes possible the extension of the work. So with social institutions. Each new generation is brought up in the environment which they create. To the younger community, the type of social life embodied in these institutions is the normal life, and they have not to win their way to it with the difficulty which their fathers experienced. Each generation records its own gains in institutions, and it is by their conserving power that social progress is possible.

Not all institutions, of course, submit themselves so readily to an analysis as that which we have just examined. There are some, as we saw above, whose origins we cannot trace, or attribute to any consciously recognized purpose. The family, e.g., which we took as typical of the action of instinct in social organization, was not created by the deliberate act of any individual or group of individuals. Its beginnings lie far back in the instinctive life of animals. Yet it is still a genuine institution. Purpose is implicit in it—a purpose both of the natural and social worlds. And in human life the purpose can pass from the level of unthinking instinct to conscious will. Indeed, we may fairly say that the family does not become an institution until that transition is made. It is because in the main the human family is the sphere of this transition that it is different in kind from the family group in animal life. It becomes institutional and ethical. Below this level—and it is idle to deny that there are some human families

below it, just as there may be some animal families above it—the family is simply a natural fact devoid of moral significance, a natural grouping existing for the ends which Nature prescribes to it. These ends are retained within the human family, and undoubtedly they affect the character and constitution of the group. But they are not its sole ends, nor do they exist merely in their old form. They are elements in a scheme, more or less consciously desired as a whole because of its promise of ethical values. And because the family is thus capable of satisfying a deep necessity of man's spiritual life it maintains itself in being. Every institution—at least, every institution that goes deeply into human life—has a long history, beginning perhaps before the emergence of humanity itself. No doubt we do not wholly understand any institution until we look at its history, and discover its primitive roots in some necessity of animal life. But history alone will not explain its place in a civilized Society; and if perhaps we effect a simplification when we speak of it as the product of mind and will, it would be much more erroneous to suppose that thought and will had little or nothing to do with it. We are concerned, here at least, with values more than with origins; and while in the study of the actual structure of an institution historical and perhaps unconscious antecedents count for much, we shall not gravely err in discussing mainly in terms of thought and purpose the real significance of an institution, and its place in a life that is constantly trying to fashion itself more completely in conformity with ethical values.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> It is evident, of course, that the study of origins is of great practical importance. In the reformation of a Society, it may become a vital question how far a given institution can serve as the instrument of a new social purpose. And for the answering of this question, it is relevant and important to inquire what the structure of the institution is, and what forces have gone to its making. But even here it is at least as important to realize that the feeling of value for human life (as we have maintained in Part I)



Again, from another point of view, it is not hard to find institutions which seem to be meaningless or whose significance is remote from that for the sake of which they were established. Most country towns, e.g., keep festivals of sorts, or commemorate some local custom whose meaning has been lost in the mists of antiquity. Or the House of Lords now exercises a function very different from that of limiting the prerogative of the Crown, which led to its inception. But such cases as these fall very readily within an analysis. For, after all, some function is exercised—in the first case that of satisfying the interest attaching to the history and traditions of a district, in the second that of maintaining what many people believe to be an important method of restraining hasty legislation.<sup>1</sup> The vitality of these institutions is exactly proportional to our recognition of the importance of the purpose which they embody. When interest in the past wanes, local festivals die of inanition. When people cease to believe that our speed of legislation is so excessive as to need checks, the House of Lords will become politically unimportant, or else it will be transformed to meet some other necessity. A purely purposeless institution it is hard to imagine; and if there are such, they are what we ordinarily call them, mere survivals, bereft of all real life and movement. It is true, of course—and we have noted it as one of the features which give institutions a special place in social life—that they, like all organic things, have a certain resisting power of their own, and may for a time withstand the forces of dissolution and decay. But that alone will not secure their continuance. For we may be

is an essential factor in its origin, and that we reach farthest in the attempt to understand its nature as an actual fact at any period by asking what it is that, on the best interpretation, it is capable of doing in such a Society as we know. What moral purposes can it embody? What does it mean to those who live its life at its fullest? That is the question which primarily concerns us here.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Part I, p. 78, on the continuity of custom.

sure that the law of life applies to institutions as to all else. The healthiest resist best, and the healthiest are those in which some genuine interest or vital purpose is embodied.

#### § 4. SUMMARY.

We may sum up and extend what we have said of institutions, and of their relation to their members, by remarking on three points.

1. Although all institutions are the creation of will, the individual does not himself always, or even often, take part in the initiation of the institutions which matter most to him. His family, his school, his Church, his industry, his State, are all prior to him in time. He finds, and does not make. But that, as we saw, is because the social world is so organized as to afford to the individual the conditions under which his personality can develop. By his contact with these, his will acquires content and direction, and he rises from the estate of pupilage to that of active participation. If he does not create, he at least sustains; and what the social world requires of him is that when, by the influence and discipline of the institutions which it has provided, he has grown to the realization of his powers, he shall devote these powers to the maintenance of the institutions which have made him what he is. It does not ask that because of their nurture he shall maintain them as he found them. It asks much more than that—that he shall devote to them his mature powers, the powers which have sprung from the commerce of his mind and Society, and which may therefore transcend anything that Society has given him. He has not merely to maintain, but to bring observation, criticism, and suggestion to his institutions, and thus make them more adequately the embodiment of mind and the instrument of spiritual development.

2. Every institution imposes its own laws on its members, and prescribes certain modes of action. We are apt to think of law as peculiarly the characteristic of the State.

But every other institution has its own laws ; and though none of them has the same coercive power as those of the State, the nature of the laws is in every case the same. They embody the modes of action which seem to the members of the institution to serve the ends for which the institution exists. A trade union is designed to secure unity of action on the part of a group of industrial workers and to create a reserve of financial strength for the event of a strike. Hence it requires all its members to lay down their tools together, to observe certain rules in the course of their work, and to make a regular contribution to the Union funds. These are all essentially laws, enacted by the members of the institution as necessary to its success. One of the elementary functions of the State is to secure property and the observance of contracts. It therefore enacts laws which provide for these ends ; and an infraction of these laws is not simply an injury to another individual, but an offence against the State itself. In both cases the enactments have the status of laws, because they are backed by force. Force is not their basis ; their basis is the common consent, or rather the common will of the Society which recognises that they are good. The kind of force differs in the two cases. If an individual breaks the law of his trade union or his club, the most powerful weapon which the institution has against him is that it may expel him from membership. The State alone has the power to subject him to physical punishment, even in the last resort to require his life.<sup>1</sup> But that the force which the State exercises is greater, and that its equipment of force is more complete, does not make the law which the greater force subserves different in kind.

<sup>1</sup> It is true that, in a sense, a trade union or a club draws its power of expulsion from the State ; i.e. an individual may bring an action at law against a union for wrongful expulsion, which is a form of breach of contract. But this really amounts simply to the recognition by the State of the union as a special institution, in which the right to punish is inherent. The significance of this point for the theory of the State will be considered later.



In every case, force is the instrument of will. It is the conditions which are believed to be essential to it, that make the application of force possible at all. If the will were lacking, all the organized force in the world could hardly make a law effective, still less confer on the institution which employed it a healthy and vigorous life.

To understand the relation of force and law, it is important to realize that a law plays the same part within an institution as the institution plays in the general system of social life. The institution marks and secures a level of social attainment; within the institution, the law does the same. It is enacted and supported by compulsory power in order to make it difficult for the members of the institution to fall below the standard it represents. It protects those who establish it, not only against others, but against themselves if at any time they should think less highly of their obligations to the institution than at the time at which they willed the enactment. And by taking its place in definite objective form, it makes the point of view which gave it birth the normal point of view of the members, so that from that stage they may move to other, perhaps more arduous, common activities.

3. Within every institution there is a system of rights and duties; that is, each institution defines a certain set of relations between its members, and, imposing on them the obligations consonant with these relations, it also confers on them the corresponding rights. The essential interdependence of these two conceptions—rights and duties—is a cardinal point in the theory of institutions. A right is not simply a claim. It is a claim which may be put forward in congruity with the character of the Society within which it is made, or—even a more decisive test—which can be put forward on the ground that its recognition by the Society will advance the object for the sake of which the Society exists. Its basis in the last resort is moral; for its justification is the belief that by refusing to admit it, the Society within which it is made falls short, to that degree, of the life of which it is capable. A right

differs from a mere demand, or a threat, just in that it belongs to a different world. It rests, not on force, but on a view of the nature and ends of a given Society. Plainly, therefore, every right, recognized or claimed, involves a corresponding duty; not merely in the sense that if I enjoy or desire a certain right, it is my duty to respect a similar or corresponding claim on your part, but in the sense that in enjoying or in claiming my right, I rely upon a definite social construction, and therefore I must admit as binding upon myself the obligations which attach to my place in that construction. Every new privilege that an institution confers on its members is a more precise articulation of the order embodied in that institution, and involves a more precise obligation.

These, then, are the characteristics of all institutions. In them the individual participates in the common activities of Society, and through them he comes to the attainment of his own personality. Institutions, therefore, are expressions of individuality, or at least the means of such expression. They are not encroachments, hostile to the free development of character and power, but the conditions under which alone such development is possible. They claim the loyalty and service of the individual, not as superior forces which he cannot evade, but as the media through which he has grown to the mastery of his own life.

Such in outline is our general thesis as to the nature of institutional or social life. We propose to examine from this point of view, and in rather more detail, some of the more important institutions of Society, and to ask what moral values are or can be realized in them. For this purpose it will be convenient to adopt the classification of p. 120, and to discuss institutions according as their end is predominantly the continuance of the race, or the enhancement of individual life, or the harmony and unity of the whole.

## CHAPTER VII

### THE FAMILY

#### § 1. THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE FAMILY.

OF all institutions there is none which has deeper roots in the human mind or is more pregnant with meaning for human life than the Family. It is to the social organism in general what the sympathetic system is to the psycho-physical, the seat of its profoundest emotional reactions and the centre of its sense of well-being or ill-being. Since this is so, it is, to say the least of it, somewhat surprising that it attracts so little attention on the part of those who at the present time are devoting themselves to the study and discussion of social questions. One reason doubtless is that it is so intimate a portion of the life of each of us that we are apt to overlook it. Another is that of all our institutions the family is the least institutional, and as it was never consciously constructed it is the least amenable to any process of conscious reconstruction. But beyond these there is a deeper reason for this evasion of the subject on the part of social reformers, the statement of which may serve as a starting-point for the present discussion. For in odd contrast to this neglect of the characteristic meaning of family life at present is the amount of attention which has been given to the early history and constitution of the family in the writings of sociologists. There is no department of social life in which recent investigations have provided us with such a wealth of material. Yet this very wealth of material, by the variety of forms which it brings before us, is apt to suggest a fundamental difficulty.



It is easy to see in the light of our previous analysis that the family at every stage has certain definitive marks. It is a mental structure ; it is rooted in primitive instincts of sex, parenthood, local attachment, possession, and jealousy ; it is a bundle of traditions—ultimately of ideas and purposes—from which it draws its unity and life. And that is sufficient to discredit the sociological nominalism which, because of this variety of forms, would refuse to find any characteristic form of the family at all, and which would, therefore, forbid us to speak of “ the ” family as we speak of an animal species. Nevertheless there is the possibility of a real doubt as to whether the family in its present or any other form is itself organically related to the main idea or purpose of human life. May it not represent, like so many animal forms, merely a survival which at any moment may become merged in something entirely different or may altogether disappear ? We have ourselves dwelt on the difference between the psychological and the ethical or teleological aspect of institutions. May it not very well be that the instincts which feed the family and in turn are fed by it are of the less desirable and enduring kind, that the traditions and ideas which give it continuity are more likely to be trivial or narrow and selfish than high and patriotic, tempting men to give to the family what is meant for mankind ? It is probably doubts like these that in the last resort are responsible for the hesitancy which seems to afflict the social reformer when he is faced with questions either of the inner reorganization of the family or of the effect of outward changes upon it. Be this as it may, it is with questions such as these that any treatment of the subject which aims at being of use in practice must concern itself.

## § 2. THE PREHISTORIC FAMILY.

Even although the facts were more a matter of agreement than they are, it would be impossible here to go into the question of the origin of the family in any detail.

It must be sufficient to indicate certain points on which more recent investigation has corrected impressions that have given colour to speculations hostile to its structure as we know it.

1. It seems a natural supposition that society begins, if not in the individual, at least in the family group, and that it grows by accretion from family to clan, from clan to tribe. "The family," says Freeman, "grew into the clan, the clan grew into the tribe." And such a view might give a certain support to the idea that as the clan and the tribe have tended to disappear with advancing civilization the same fate awaits the family. As a matter of fact all the evidence is in the direction of showing that the "primary group" is not the family but the clan. If it were not so it would be impossible to explain the familiar fact that groups of kinsmen of the same name as in England, America, Australia are scattered throughout all the local tribes, while contrariwise each local tribe contains many groups claiming different origin and different ancestors.<sup>1</sup> The true analogy is not accretion, but precipitation. The family must be thought of as a precipitate or deposit from the working system of the clan as bones and tissue are said to be deposited by the physical organism. Like these, it is required to give coherence and solidity to the looser texture by which it is deposited. On this view the natural supposition is that (as has actually happened), while clan and tribe have tended to disappear from national life, the family has come more into evidence.

2. A second correction of earlier views concerns the *form* of the prehistoric family. Probably by far the most important discovery of recent sociology is the so-called classificatory system—the custom in primitive communities of applying names which to us denote particular individuals or definite relationships—father, mother, husband, wife, uncle—to whole groups of persons. On the ground of its wide prevalence some writers have

<sup>1</sup> See art. "Family," *Encyclopædia Britannica*.

jumped to the conclusion that we are led back in early society to a stage of promiscuity which shows at any rate that family life as we know it is not necessary to social cohesion. Here again all more recent investigation is in the direction of the disproof of any such inference. "Our available knowledge," writes Dr. W. H. R. Rivers, "whether derived from features of the classificatory system or from other social facts, does not provide one shred of evidence in favour of such a condition as was put forward by Morgan as the earliest stage of human society; nor is there any evidence that such promiscuity has ever been the ruling principle of a people at any later stage of the history of mankind."<sup>1</sup> We may not be able to accept the view that "the firmly wedded single family exists even at the lowest stage of culture, as a rule, without exception." On the other hand, all the available evidence goes to show that primitive marriage is hedged round with customary restrictions as to age, kinship, and method of courtship which, however shocking some of them may be to modern feeling, involve volitional control in the interest of social cohesion. As Professor Lofthouse puts it: "Throughout a cohesive force has been at work; both its intension and its extension have varied with varying circumstances and modes of life; but on its existence has depended the welfare and the progress of the human race."<sup>2</sup>

3. Can we go farther, and say that the central restriction of monogamy has the support of the earliest origin? In a field where so little can be known with precision it is natural that sociological writers should be led to opposite views.<sup>3</sup> There is no need to take sides with one or the

<sup>1</sup> *Kinship and Social Organization*, p. 85. Morgan laid great stress on the "Hawaiian system." Dr. Rivers points out that "Hawaiian promiscuity, in so far as it existed, was not the condition of the whole people, but only of the chiefs who alone were allowed to contract brother and sister marriages."

<sup>2</sup> Lofthouse, *Ethics and the Family*, p. 88.

<sup>3</sup> "The phenomena . . . everywhere point to monogamy" (Wundt, *Elements of Folk Psychology*, p. 48). "Polygamy, limited



other. The question of origin is only of significance in so far as it enables us to verify from the first the operation of the forces that enter into and give permanence to the institution in its most fully developed form. Since here, as we shall see, the main force is ethical, we shall not expect to find it prominent in a stage of society at which inner form and idea is in its infancy and outward circumstances constitute the chief formative force. It is more important to notice that even at the earliest stage some of the deeper instincts are enlisted on the side of monogamy.<sup>1</sup> There is a later stage at which, owing to war, the naturally approximate equality of the numbers of the sexes is upset, while at the same time and partly for the same reason there is a greater desire for offspring as ministering to wealth and power. Even here polygamy is confined to the rich and powerful, and as civilization advances, besides the re-establishment of the natural proportion, other factors—the prolongation of physical attractiveness, the growth of admiration for other than physical qualities and respect for the personality of women—make for monogamy.<sup>2</sup>

### § 3. THE HISTORIC FAMILY.

In order to realize the precise problem that faces us to-day, it is necessary to recall the forces other than those

very narrowly by poverty and the relative number of the sexes, is the prevalent type of marriage in uncivilized society" (L. T. Hobhouse, *Morals in Evolution*, i. p. 143).

<sup>1</sup> Westermarck, besides respect for the feelings of the weak, speaks of "the true monogamous sentiment, the absorbing passion for one, which is not unknown even among savage races" (*The Origin and Development of Moral Ideas*, ii. 389 foll.).

<sup>2</sup> Even the Church's theory of the indissolubility of the moral tie was instinctively anticipated by the higher civilizations of the pagan world. Of Germany, Tacitus tells us that a woman had one husband as she had one body and one soul (quoted by C. H. Pearson, *National Life and Character*, p. 249, who adds: "On the whole it is probably correct to say that every healthy society has endeavoured in its best times, at least, to treat marriage as indissoluble").

already mentioned which have given form and stability to the family in the past. From the beginning it has had other foundations than natural instinct. Of these, three deserve particular notice. (a) From the beginning the family was an economic unit. It was not merely that wife and children were regarded as property. Because of their joint contribution to the means of life, they were property of a particularly valuable kind. This is seen in its most striking form in the "greater family" that has maintained itself to the present day in Russia, China, and Japan. There several generations form a household engaged in the cultivation of the soil. But the economic bond existed in the "lesser family" of two generations, and almost up to the present time the family has represented a division of labour which has given stability to the union of affection. (b) The family took the place of the State in that whatever the subjection of the members to the head of the family group, they had a certain status in the general society by reason of their place in the smaller circle. This is seen in its most fully developed form in the *patria potestas* of the Romans; but the Roman system was merely a legalizing of the authority with which custom clothed the head of the family in an age when the chief repository of wisdom in the conduct of life was the "tradition of the elders." It is important in estimating the strength of the family bond in the past to realize that so powerful a sentiment as respect for knowledge and wisdom was enlisted on its behalf. But it is only when we remember the comparatively small place that mere human wisdom held and the transcendent importance that attached to right relations with the unseen that we come in sight of the deepest root of the authority of the head of the family and therewith of the institution itself. (c) The family hearth was the centre of early religious life. Whatever we hold as to the place of magic in early society, the prevalence of ancestor-worship at this later stage is a social fact of prime importance. Religion at this period consisted, not in the vague fear of unknown powers which

had to be controlled by magical rites, but in the loving service of beings who were knit to their worshippers by the intimate bond of kinship.<sup>1</sup> On the due performance of the household sacrifices depended the maintenance of the relation between the living and the dead. In this way the head of the family upon earth appeared, not merely as an object of common affection nor merely as the pivot of industrial life and the dispenser of social justice, but as the medium through which the love of the living extended itself to the great company of the dead and linked the present generation with an immemorial past.

We can understand how during the age when these beliefs prevailed, the whole force of the religious sentiment came to be enlisted on the side of the family, and how to serve it, to preserve its traditions, to protect its purity, came to be regarded as "the whole duty of man, at once his religion and morality."<sup>2</sup>

#### § 4. THE FAMILY AND THE MODERN WORLD.

That of these historic foundations little but the ruins remain, and that this change has profoundly influenced the family, needs little showing. Owing partly to the great dispersion of the population from its native seats upon the land, and partly to the new aggregation of it for industrial purposes in factories and workshops, the family is no longer "an economic unit." Where family industry survives, it is in the degraded form of sweated labour. This might not be the last word if it could be shown that family traditions have survived and that sons still followed the industrial footsteps of their fathers. That this is the case to a far larger extent than has commonly been supposed has been shown by investigations into family records in certain industries.<sup>3</sup> But the limits within which

<sup>1</sup> See Dewey and Tuft's *Ethics*, p. 30.

<sup>2</sup> H. Bosanquet, *The Family*, p. 19.

<sup>3</sup> See H. Bosanquet, *op. cit.*, *Basis of the Modern Family*, where the conclusion is that "wherever we find an industry of any degree



this is true are admittedly narrow ; and against it we have to set, not only the mobility but the instability of modern industry, involving such constant adaptations to new circumstances that continuity of tradition is almost impossible.

The same conditions, by transferring the employment of children and women to factories and offices, are acting as positive dissolvents of family life. The results are too familiar to require emphasis. Children acquire an early independence, while in the minds of a growing number of women marriage is becoming a secondary matter in the plan of life. Acting in the same direction and equally familiar in their effects are the housing conditions which are the result of the hastily improvised accommodation for the working classes in large cities. Where a strong family feeling exists we may admit that "the size of the house is not an essential feature," and that "a single room may be more of a home" than a palace.<sup>1</sup> But it is the conditions favourable or unfavourable to the *development* of this with which we are concerned, and it cannot be maintained that one or even three-roomed houses either can or ought to act otherwise than as a dispersive force. It is to the attempt to meet the difficulty of the failure of home attractions that we owe the rise and spread of girls' and boys' clubs. But as far as the family unity is concerned these are apt to act in the same direction as the evils they combat.<sup>2</sup>

In the same way our own time has seen the gradual sapping of the "political foundations" of the family.

of specialization, as distinct from unskilled and unspecialized labour, there we may find to a greater or less extent a continuity of work binding the generations together and affording a basis for continuous family life as real and firm, if not as tangible, as landed property itself" (p. 217).

<sup>1</sup> Op. cit. p. 326.

<sup>2</sup> There is an instance of a girls' club that was nearly wrecked by the well-meaning proposal of the lady-in-charge that a report should be sent to their parents of their progress in sewing. "What have they to do with it?" was the rejoinder.

Wife and children no longer depend for their status as citizens on the will of the head of the household. More and more the State is undertaking the protection of rights. More and more the elementary conditions of self-development and self-determination in education, health, and independent possession are becoming the subject of legal enactment. Going along with this is the weakening of the bond of authority and the growth of the "spirit of choice" <sup>1</sup> in all the relations of family life—a growing resentment of everything that brings pressure to bear on individual liking.

The decay of ancestor-worship in all its forms is, of course, an old story in the West, but the decay of religion as a bond and sanctification of family life is recent. It is not only that family worship and the "big Ha' Bible" of childhood's memories have become in our own time little else than a survival, nor even merely that the beliefs on which the particular sanctity of marriage as a sacrament rested have been undermined, but that the whole idea of marriage and the family as possessing any special significance for man's spiritual life and his relation to God has ceased to operate with any force on the minds of parents and children. It might, indeed, have been expected that the teaching and practice of the Churches which still acknowledge the authority of Scripture should remain a stronghold of family life. But it is disquieting to find writers so exceptionally qualified to interpret the religious atmosphere of our time as Professor Lofthouse reporting in the opposite sense. "Hitherto," he writes, "religion and the family have travelled hand in hand. Religion has sanctified the family relationships and has found its central stronghold in family ceremonials." But all this has now been changed, and "the ancient prophecy that daughter will be set against mother and daughter-in-law against mother-in-law is finding a literal fulfilment, not only in the foreign mission field but in almost every district at home where there is

<sup>1</sup> Professor Cooley's phrase.

an 'aggressive' church or chapel. . . . The varied activities of our modern religious societies leave no time for the leisurely joys of home ; each sex and age has its appropriate gathering and organization ; and the religious disintegration of the more fortunate classes proceeds by differences of taste, education, friendship, and interest, as that of the poor is hurried on by the possibilities of excitement or charity in church and chapel alike." <sup>1</sup>

All these changes have raised in a new and acute form in our time the question of the permanence of the family as a social institution. In view of them so sober a writer as Charles H. Pearson has reached the conclusion that, while certain imperishable instincts will maintain the semblance of the old relations and family life remain as a gracious and decorative incident of society, " the family as a constituent part of the State, as the matrix in which character is moulded, will lose its importance as the clan and the city have done." <sup>2</sup> Our answer to this forecast will depend on our being able to show that the family has other foundations than those laid for it in the old order, and that in spite of the decay of the old supports, perhaps just because of it, these foundations are in the process of becoming more securely established. The problem, then, of the family resolves itself into these two questions : first, Is there a function which from the beginning and in all its changing forms it has more or less adequately performed, and which, in spite of existing defects, it and it alone, so far as we can see, can perform ? and secondly, Granted that there is, how is this function affected by the changes that are taking place in the general social environment ?

#### § 5. THE ETHICAL FUNCTION OF THE FAMILY.

We have seen how the existence and well-being of society depend primarily upon the degree in which the instincts,

<sup>1</sup> Op. cit. p. 342.

<sup>2</sup> *National Life and Character : A Forecast*, Chapter V, " The Decline of the Family," p. 270.



habits, and purposes of individuals are taken up into and permeated by the will to a good which is common in the sense that the attainment of it by each is the attainment of it by all. We have seen that this condition is fulfilled only by such things as truth, beauty, and friendship. Further, these do not, like material things, come to us from without independently of the choice and of the state of mind of the possessor. They are what Aristotle called "goods of the soul." They are good only in so far as they are chosen by individual minds and wills and represent the principle of all their striving—in other words, in so far as they take the form of goodness. It is on these grounds, finally, that we have claimed that the value of social institutions must in the last resort be measured by the degree in which they are instrumental in effecting the transition from the instability and confusion of natural impulse or from prematurely formed habits, that tend to fix the more elementary and more purely animal instincts, to the capacities of heart and mind which are implied in goodness as thus defined. Moral development means self-identification in will and affection with ever wider and more significant ends. In reality there is no distinction between the individual and corporate good. Man's deepest interest is union with his fellow-man. "There is nothing," said Spinoza,<sup>1</sup> "more useful to man than man." But the individual requires to be led step by step out of the illusions of the cave no less in the moral than in the intellectual world, and in the one no less than in the other it is the first step that costs. That it should be made at all it is necessary that the common purpose should present its appeal to him at the beginning through the medium of the natural affections where these are strongest, and where they are weaker that it should be brought near and appear to him in a form which can be easily recognized as his own deeper interest. If we come to the consideration of the family with this standard in mind, we shall be prepared to recognize in it, if not as it has been generally in the past or is generally at present,

<sup>1</sup> *Ethics*, IV. xviii. Schol.

but as it has been and is at its best, a unique instrument of effecting just this transition. In the attempt to indicate how it does it, a wise writer on the subject warns us that it may be "a theme fitter for the poet than for sober prose." But we may take courage from the same writer's remark that some service may be done by simply saying, "Look there!"<sup>1</sup> to mention one or two points which, just because they are so near and familiar, we are apt to overlook.

The first is the place of parental love as the effective medium in which the first steps of the transition are taken by the infant from the moment of its entry into independent life. We think of birth as the separation of parent and child. There is a separation of body, but there is no similar separation of mind. On the contrary, the dissolution of the bodily union is the condition of the union of soul which thenceforth begins to take its place. "The mother," as William Wallace puts it, "already enriched with reason and love, bending over her infant, does not by her glance, her smile, her touch, give it a soul, a spirit, a reason: and yet in that glance, that smile, that touch, soul, spirit, reason are as surely born as the physiological life of the same child is born. . . . It is the mother's and father's look and touch, charged with the fruits of life, of life both theirs and that of myriad others which have gone to make up theirs, which kindles into flame the dull materials of humanity and begins that second birth, that spiritual parentship, which at least not less than the first should be the peculiar glory of human father and motherhood."<sup>2</sup> Of course it is not merely a matter of passive reception on the part of the child. What is being achieved is that when the time comes for action the child goes out of himself in the form of returned affection as instinctively as in the pursuit of the objects of animal appetite. As in their early pliancy muscle and tendon fall naturally into the movements required for physical

<sup>1</sup> H. Bosanquet, *op. cit.* p. 343.

<sup>2</sup> *Lectures and Essays on Natural Theology and Ethics*, p. 114.

life, so in the softening medium of natural affection, the will of the child is moulded into the form of the social life around it, and the foundations of the spirit of dutifulness are laid in the pieties of the home.<sup>1</sup>

Nor is the influence only on one side. The process which from one side is the initiation of the child into the affections and interests of social life from the other is the initiation of the parent into a new and more concrete and responsible form of moral experience. "The gift of soul and spirit, if gift it be," continues Wallace, "is not on one side only. If the parent in a way makes the child, it is not less true that the child makes the parent. He kindles new light and pierces out new depths in the parent soul, builds his world anew with other features and fabric than of old. . . . If the parent ever really sees his child, eye to eye and approaches him touch to touch—and unfortunately we dare not assume that this always happens, so many parents and children have never seen each other's soul-face—he is not as he was before." What conceals this vital truth from us is, as has been already said, its familiarity. We need the poet's touch as in Bret Harte's *Luck of the Roaring Camp* to bring home to us what lies at our door: the profound influence that instinctive reverence for childhood has on the character even of the worst and to convince us that we have only to "remove the sentiments arising out of the idea of the family and the fabric of society would not stand the strain of the savage instincts of mankind."<sup>2</sup> And if these remarks apply primarily to the earlier, unconscious stage of the process, they are applicable, as the above quotations

<sup>1</sup> Burke, in well-known passages, speaks of family affection as "a sort of elemental training in those higher and more enlarged regards by which alone men can be affected as with their own concern," "the first link in the series by which we proceed towards a love to our country and to mankind." In the same spirit Professor Lofthouse claims that "there is no impassable gulf between individual and State. The gulf has been bridged, and that bridge is the family" (op. cit. p. 139).

<sup>2</sup> Blackmore and Gillen, *Outlines of Sociology*, p. 121.



indicate, to the later and more conscious stages as well. Spencer has pointed out<sup>1</sup> how the moral nature of the parent is deepened by sympathetic contact with the child's, and how "the last stage in the mental development of each man and woman is to be reached only through a proper discharge of the parental duties." Equally important to notice is the *widening* influence of family affection on the parents no less than on the child. No doubt where parents enclose themselves in a hard shell of dogma and prejudice, which turns a deaf ear to "the younger generation knocking at the door," we have the elements of tragedy.<sup>2</sup> But it would only be in his haste that any one would attribute this to the family relation itself instead of to the clash of forces that comes from its imperfect adaptation to rapidly changing conditions. In ordinary cases and still more in the best the words already quoted with reference to the individual and the State hold of the old and the new generation: "there is no impassable gulf between them; the gulf has been bridged and the bridge is the family."

But, in the second place, it is not merely or perhaps mainly in the relation of parent to child that the socializing influence of the family is to be looked for, but in that of husband and wife to each other. Ethical writers have pointed out how the desire to please enters into the sex-relation from the beginning and how an "attachment" means to many the first prolonged effort at maintaining an unselfish attitude to life.<sup>3</sup> But it is in the married relation that its testing and disciplining force fully manifests itself. This is an aspect of marriage which tended to fall out of sight in the Romantic literature of last century, which represented trial and conflict as ending with the wedding bells. From this point of view it was a step in advance when the marriage problem became the keynote

<sup>1</sup> *Education, Intellectual, Moral, and Physical*, p. 143.

<sup>2</sup> As in Edmund Gosse's *Father and Son*.

<sup>3</sup> See Dewey and Tuft, *op. cit.* p. 47. The ethics of courtship and engagement has not received the attention it deserves.

of the novel and the play. But we make a great mistake if we take the picture that it is the fashion to draw of a state of things in which open disruption is only avoided by some sort of ignoble compromise or hypocrisy as typical even of normal married life and a condemnation of it. So far is the married relation from being responsible for the suppression of personality and the misunderstandings that are the theme of this kind of literature, it will usually be found that these are the outcome just of the neglect of the opportunities of self-discipline which better instruction in the meaning of the institution would lead men and women to look for in it. It is precisely because, instead of being looked to as a school of unselfishness, marriage has been treated, contrary to its nature, as offering only a wider field for selfish enjoyment and the exercise of caprice, that problems of this kind arise at all and that when they arise they present themselves as insoluble. In this whole matter there is nothing that requires more insistent emphasis than the truth that R. L. Stevenson, himself with the best right to speak, so well expresses: "Falling in love and winning love are often difficult tasks to rebellious and overbearing spirits; but to keep in love is also a business of some importance to which man and wife must bring kindness and goodwill. The true love story commences at the altar, when there lies before the married pair a more beautiful contest of wisdom and generosity." It is, of course, true that if even so the story is to have a happy ending, the contest must be inspired by the right kind of unanimity. "Man and wife must not only be agreed," as Stevenson puts it, "in their catchwords in '*facts of religion*' or '*facts of science*' or '*society, my dear,*'" but must have the agreement which Aristotle comprehensively describes as "being of the same mind in the State." But our contention is just that, given ordinary prudence and goodwill in entering marriage, the family for most people is the best training-ground for this deeper kind of unanimity.

## § 6. MODERN CONDITIONS AS THEY AFFECT THE FAMILY.

If, with this idea of its ethical function in mind, we return to the question of the degree in which the family is threatened by the changes noted in a previous section, we may be prepared to find that, in spite of ominous symptoms incident to a time of transition, the changes themselves on the whole represent rather the removal of obstructions to the display of its full power as an embodiment of will than the destruction of anything essential to its continuance as an integral element of social life. Speaking generally from the point of view of these lectures, we are not likely to find any threat in changes that have the result of transforming it from a merely instinctive union of the sexes supported by economic necessity and riveted by social custom into a free union of *persons* with the capacity and the duty of realizing a common purpose of the deepest social significance. With the transition from the constraint of custom and authority to the "spirit of choice," there necessarily goes the danger of the abuse of freedom. Marriage and the family offer peculiar temptations. By putting passion and pleasure in the foreground, while burden and responsibility fall into the background of a comparatively remote future, they tempt the more thoughtless to immediate indulgence, the more prudent and imaginative to indefinite postponement. It looks as though in an age of emancipation they were expressly designed to compass their own destruction. This peculiarity is one that reformers have constantly to keep in mind in the effort to adapt them by changes in public opinion or by legislation to the new circumstances.<sup>1</sup> But here, as elsewhere, this is only the price that has to be paid for what in the end promises immeasurable gain.

<sup>1</sup> The point is excellently brought out by Mrs. Bosanquet in an article on "English Divorce Law and the Report of the Royal Commission" (*International Journal of Ethics*, xxiii. 443).



1. Coming to particulars and looking at present changes first from the point of view of what we have called the political basis of the family and the formal rights of its members, there is the less reason to linger on their significance since it is precisely here that the substitution of independent personality for dependence on the will of another is obviously the condition of the realization of moral purpose in family relations. That the civic rights of wife and child should depend on their membership of a particular family or on the arbitrary will of an individual is clearly incompatible with the institution as a union of wills resting on unanimity. Questions doubtless arise as to the limits within which separate rights of husband and wife, parent and child should be recognized.<sup>1</sup> But the time has gone past when these are decided on the principle of inferiority before the law. One fact may seem to impugn the relevance of this contention. It is that certain material duties—such as the care of the health, education, and nutrition of children—are in process of being taken over by the State; and it is just in the performance of these functions that the moralizing influence of parents on children and children on parents operates. But the matter is not so simple as this criticism would seem to imply. If there were any serious proposal to transfer these functions wholesale from the family to the State on the ground of the State's interest in seeing at all hazards that children are healthy and intelligent, the critic would be right in pointing out, in the spirit of our argument, the place of parental responsibility as the very breath and life of the family and through it of a healthy society. On the other hand, it may be urged that a State which recognizes its duty to the family

<sup>1</sup> In French law a father may apply to have his child put in prison for six months; English law only allows a parent to apply to have him put into an industrial school. Both English and French law recognizes the wife's property; French law assigns her in addition a share of the husband's savings—an excellent provision.

will be careful to see that collectivist action shall take the form, not of relieving parents of their duties, but of enlisting their sympathies in a deeper conception of what these duties are, and of removing obstructions to the performance of them. There is, doubtless, a kind of relief that results in leaving parents with more time and money for selfish indulgence, but there is also a kind which relieves the family of functions that it can only at best perform badly in order to substitute others which it alone can perform, and, in virtue of the relief, can perform more efficiently.

On the whole, it may be said that the changes which have been effected or are likely to be effected in the above respects are in the direction of a summons through the school visitor, the health inspector, the school clinic, even the school meal, under proper regulations, to a higher conception of parental duty. This, at any rate, may be said, that any parent who lived up to the opportunities of the new order would have the opportunity of far deeper touch with the soul of the child and the child with the soul of the parent than under the old. There can be no more fatal mistake surely than to seek to develop a sense of responsibility by keeping the responsibilities on a low level when they could rise to a higher.<sup>1</sup>

Similarly with regard to the rule of the household, difficulties may rise as to the seat of authority. But here, too, the principle admits of clear statement. Rule and authority there must be in the family no less than in the State, but what we are coming to see in the democratic State is that rule is much more divided than we are accustomed to suppose. The principle of this distribution of authority is capacity for function in particular departments of administration, not the delegation of a power held in his own right by an individual person. It is the same in a well-ordered household where, as Aristotle (still our best authority on the spirit of the true family) says,

<sup>1</sup> See on this whole subject the excellent treatment in E. J. Urwick's *A Philosophy of Social Progress*, pp. 201 and 255.

the husband rules and assigns rule to others according to capacity.<sup>1</sup>

2. The question of the influence of the new economic order on the ethical function of the family centres round the scope it offers to women of realizing what we might call "economic personality," outside of family life. With the War we have probably heard the last of the old domestic theory of the place of women. Its error was not so much the emphasis it laid on the home, but the narrowness of its conception of it. "A theory," writes Professor Dewey, "which would limit the mother to 'the home' needs first to define the limits of 'the home.' To measure its responsibilities by the limit of the street door is as absurd as to suppose that the sphere of justice is limited by the walls of the court-room."<sup>2</sup>

The real danger comes from the opposite side, from those who, in violent reaction against the exclusiveness of the domestic theory which would divide the family as by closed doors from the contagion of the economic world, seek incontinently a complete assimilation of the two by treating the production of children and household management as a form of remunerative industry.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Ἄνδρὸς δὲ καὶ γυναικὸς ἀριστοκρατικὴ (κοινωνία) φαίνεται κατ' ἀξίαν γὰρ ὁ ἀνὴρ ἄρχει, καὶ περὶ ταῦτα ἃ δει τὸν ἄνδρα ὅσα δὲ γυναικὶ ἀρμόζει ἐκείνη ἀποδίδωσιν. ἀπάντων δὲ κυριεύων ὁ ἀνὴρ εἰς ὀλιγαρχίαν μεθίστησιν· παρὰ τὴν ἀξίαν γὰρ αὐτὸ ποιεῖ, καὶ οὐχ ἢ ἀμείνων (*Ethics*, viii. 10, 5. Aristotle calls this aristocracy; we should call it the principle of democracy).

<sup>2</sup> Op. cit. p. 602.

<sup>3</sup> There is a certain irony in the fact that a view which represents the extreme of individualism in its advocacy of the economic independence of husband and wife should be chiefly current among Socialists. The reason doubtless is that much of the current economic Socialism carries on the assumption of the individualism against which it thinks itself in revolt, viz. that the will and conscience of individuals are incapable of sustaining the conditions of organic unity. Maternity insurance as the earmarking of part of the family wage, increased by a contribution from the State for a special purpose, is, of course, something quite different from the "endowment of maternity" as understood by its advocates.



This alone is sufficient to suggest that what is wrong in present changes is not the destruction of the "economic unity" of the family, but the survival of ideas which that unity encouraged. If this be true, the remedy is to be sought, not in the attempt to restore it in a new form which would only mean a deeper disintegration, but in the clear recognition of the family as having its roots in a function which bears no analogy to economic production. But even so the question remains of the extent to which this function is itself as a matter of fact endangered by the shifting of the economic centre from the family to the community. It is sufficiently important to require more detailed treatment.

The influence of the new order on the constitution of the family is said to manifest itself chiefly in three different directions. (a) The attractions of the world of work are said to disincline more highly gifted women to marriage, and thus lead to a diminution of the number of family groups just where their formation is socially the most desirable. (b) They tempt working-class mothers away from home, to the detriment of its health, cleanliness, and moral influence. (c) By increasing the stress of competition and making it more difficult for parents to support and settle in life a large number of children they lead to a diminution of the size of the family group—again just in those classes which it is desirable should hand on the socially valuable characters of competence and thrift.

(a) With reference to the first of these accusations, the fact that industrial changes have opened up a market for women's work as an alternative to marriage is anything but an evil in itself. No one who realizes the devastation that the unequal yoking of man and woman in the past has wrought will be inclined to deny the ethical significance of changes which give women the opportunity of seeking first that which is spiritual in the most important relations of life. It means the closing of the "marriage market." Nor need any one who realizes the depth of sex attraction and the increase of honour that thus

attaches to marriage as the symbol of deeper affinities be seriously alarmed for the institution. As a matter of fact there is no sign of any real decrease in the marriage rate.<sup>1</sup> Granted that in the most highly selected class we find—for example, in the Oxford and Cambridge Women's Colleges—the rate of marriage is low.<sup>2</sup> This is probably to be accounted for, not by any aversion of these women to marriage itself. It is the *kind* of marriage that they see in too many cases that disheartens them. For themselves they are determined to have nothing but the real thing. They look in marriage, not only for the old-fashioned union of hearts, but for the union of both heart and head in interests that will survive the mere attractions of sex, and form a solid bond of union even in the absence of others which, like children, depend on fortune. If they fail to find the promise of this it is surely to the good that a part of the apparently inevitable surplus<sup>3</sup> of women should consist of those who have been educated up to that other kind of love and that other kind of parenthood of which Plato speaks in the Symposium.<sup>4</sup> The family is not likely to suffer from the devotion of the most highly gifted women to the work of handing on that better

<sup>1</sup> The writer of the article on population in the 10th edition of the *Encyclopædia Britannica* supports the proposition that in England marriages are later and fewer by figures which give for the decade 1861-1870 16.7 married persons per 1,000 of the population, for 1895-1904 15.8; but for the same periods Scotland gives 14.0 and 14.3, and statistics since the beginning of the present century in England and Wales give 16.4 for the four years 1911-15 (or leaving out of account the first year of the war, in which the highest rate on record is reached) 15.6, as against 15.3 for 1876-80. "There is no reason to doubt," writes Professor Cooley, "that a congenial marriage continues to be the almost universal feminine ideal."

<sup>2</sup> Whetham puts it at 22 per cent. He notes that the proportion is higher among those who do not take the final examination, or, taking the examination, fail to obtain honours! (See *The Family and the Nation*, p. 143.)

<sup>3</sup> See *Encyclopædia Britannica*, loc. cit.

<sup>4</sup> P. 208 foll.

social inheritance from which it has itself the most to hope.<sup>1</sup>

(b) The question of the employment of women, and especially married women, in workshops and factories is a wider and more difficult one. It is generally admitted that it acts unfavourably on the family in two ways—first in the time and energy that is withdrawn from the care of the home, and secondly in the tendency to lower the standard of wages. Where the motive to undertake such work is the greater excitement of it<sup>2</sup> there is nothing to be said for the employment of married women. But in by far the larger number of cases it is the result of a state of things which makes the industrial employment of women with young children a necessity, and which few will be found ready to defend.

The remedy is to be sought, not in the exclusion of women, married or unmarried, from industrial employment, but in raising—whether by a legally enforced minimum wage, by trade union organization, or by both—the general standard of wages to what is necessary for the adequate support of a family. This would have the result in the

<sup>1</sup> “Nothing,” writes Professor C. H. Cooley, “in modern civilization is more widely and subtly beneficent than the enlargement of women in social function. It means that a half of human nature is newly enfranchised, instructed, and enabled to become a more conscious and effective factor in life. The ideals of home and the care of children, in spite of pessimists, are changing for the better, and the work of women in independent careers is largely in the direction of much-needed social service—education and philanthropy in the largest sense of the words. One may say that the maternal instinct has been set free and organized on a vast scale; for the activities in which women most excel are those inspired by sympathy with children and with the weak or suffering classes” (*Social Organization*, pp. 363-4).

<sup>2</sup> With what a fatal attraction factory life may act on those who are accustomed to it was illustrated by a trade union secretary, who quoted instances of women who paid 4s. a week for some one to mind the children while they were themselves earning 7s. to 9s., alleging as a reason that they were tired of staying at home (cf. the interesting answers of work-women reported in Professor Graham Wallas's *Great Society*, p. 363 foll.).



great majority of cases of making the labour of married women with children unnecessary, and it would at the same time prevent the undercutting of men's wages. If such a standard meant a larger wage to some women, "without encumbrances," this is only just and expedient on the principle of equal wages for equal work. Any disqualification on the ground of sex would be putting a handicap on women in the use of their natural powers to reach a higher standard of skill, and thereby on the industrial efficiency of the nation. The case of widows with young children would remain, but it is just in their case that the idea of the moral needs of the family is effecting a revolution in Poor Law and, as we must now add, in military pensions administration.

(c) Statistics as to the birth rate leave no doubt as to present tendencies of Western civilization. To take England and Wales alone, whereas the birth rate per 1,000 of the population between 1840 and 1880 remained fairly steady, since then there has been a rapid decline from 34·2 in the latter date to 23·8 in 1914, now the lowest in any country except France. If this reduction were uniform in all classes it would be a sufficient cause for concern ; but it is the contrast of the upper ranks of society in general and of the upper ranks of labour in particular with the lower and less socially adapted classes of unskilled labour and of the mentally defective that is the chief source of alarm. For, whereas, in order to maintain a particular level of population, the average number of children per family ought not to be allowed to sink below four, the families which may be presumed to represent the best stocks is nearer three.<sup>1</sup>

That these facts have an intimate bearing on the ethical function of the family goes without saying. It is not merely that the psycho-physical quality of the race is endangered, but the internal efficiency of the family as a training in character is adversely affected by anything

<sup>1</sup> These figures are taken from the Whethams' treatment of this subject in *The Family and the Nation*, p. 138 foll. .

that restricts the interplay of moral forces within it. Without doubt, "for the welfare, happiness, and training of the children themselves a fairly large family is best."<sup>1</sup> It is this that makes it so important to form a just estimate of the causes that are at work and the extent to which they indicate a radical failure in the institution of the family itself.

In trying to form such an estimate within the limits allowed us, we shall put ourselves in line with the conclusions of those who have given most thought to this subject if we note that, from the point of view of these lectures, the limitation of the family cannot be regarded as wholly an evil if it means an increased sense of responsibility in the matter of upbringing. That this is one of the main causes at work—indeed, the only one that can be said, as in the case of France, to act on a national scale is generally admitted.<sup>2</sup> It only becomes an evil when, through mistaken ideas of what is owed to the children themselves or through the spread of luxurious tastes and the growth of the spirit of selfishness, parents show themselves insensitive to the larger issues for the nation and the race that are involved in the undue limitation of the family. That these are leading factors in the situation is also a matter of common agreement. But that they are the necessary outcome of the larger tendencies with which we are here dealing, and give reason to despair of the family as the guardian both of the quantity and the quality of the population can only be maintained by those who take a despairing view of the deeper forces at work in human nature itself. If, with writers like Mr. Benjamin Kidd<sup>3</sup> and Mr. A. J. Balfour,<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Op. cit. p. 193.

<sup>2</sup> The Whethams give it the first place in their excellent treatment of this subject.

<sup>3</sup> See *Social Evolution*, especially chap. iii. "No Rational Sanction for Progress."

<sup>4</sup> See *A Defence of Philosophic Doubt*. One does not put these writers on the same level. In his more recent writings Mr. Balfour seems to have to a large extent corrected his older view.

we admit that the dominance of life by reason and will means the attempt to organize it in the interest of selfish enjoyment, and if, therefore, for the maintenance of devotion to wider ends, we have to rely on forces, which they call religious, impressing themselves from without, then we are staking the existence, not only of the family, but of the State and civilization as a whole on chance currents of emotion. If, on the other hand, as we have contended in these lectures, will and reason by their own nature unite men in the larger view of what life may be for them at its best, there is no need to regard present abuse of the knowledge of the means of regulating population as the necessary result of emancipation from the control of instinct and custom. It may very well be that present tendencies are only another illustration of the dangers of the "little" and that the remedy is to be sought in the fuller knowledge among men and women of what they are committed to by their interest in social life—in other words, of what they really desire for themselves and their children.

To take a concrete illustration from the subject before us: We have spoken above of the extent to which the limitation of the family is attributable to mistaken ideas of what is due to the children themselves. In support of this it has been observed by more than one writer that the countries and classes in which the prudential motive has acted most powerfully have been dominated by a particular view of the economic environment which bears a singular resemblance to the old wage-fund theory. There has been in the minds of parents an underlying assumption of an outside world of trade, business and profession, offering a definite number of posts with more or less fixed remuneration. Consequently they have conceived their duty to their children as an effort to secure for them the reversion of something vacated by another. Instead of seeking to give them the kind of education that will enable them to measure themselves against the world of indefinite opportunity as they will



actually find it, parents take the narrow limits of the definite world they think they see as the measure of the endowment they owe their children. The influence of this assumption has been most obvious perhaps in France, with the result, as an acute observer <sup>1</sup> notes, that parents, unable to rely any longer on the family community, "which is dissolved, or on the children's own initiative, which is smothered by their mode of education," have been fain to make the establishment of their children a charge upon themselves. But it is widely current in other countries and not least in our own. What is noticeable in it from the point of view of the present section is the compromise which it represents between the old idea of the family as an economic unit, securing the position of the children within it, and the idea of it as confining itself to the function of preparing the child by the development of its innate capacities to play a man's or a woman's part in a world of indefinite opportunity. Which of these views represents the true interest of the child hardly admits of doubt. And the conclusion is forced upon us that the present undue limitation of families, though occasioned by the change in economic conditions, is not really attributable to it, but to the survival of an attitude of mind inherited from the old order in which security against the hazards of self-maintenance was provided for by the organization of the family instead of by the energy and initiative of the individual. Going along with the spread of more intelligent ideas as to what is best alike for the children themselves and for the world for which they are being prepared, we may expect to find a check to the present tendency to cut down the family to a pattern so detrimental to both.

<sup>1</sup> M. Desmoulins, in his *Superiority of the Anglo-Saxon: to What it is Due*, p. 119. Though translated from the 10th French edition so long ago as 1898, this book gains additional interest for English readers from the War. Attention was called to it by Mrs. Bosanquet's quotation of the above passage from it, *op. cit.* p. 236.

Attention has been drawn by writers of different schools<sup>1</sup> to the influence of *fashion* on the size of families. But fashion, at the stage of social development at which use and wont merge in will and purpose, is only another name for public opinion. The chief requirement at the present moment is a more educated public opinion as to the true purpose of the family as the main instrument whereby the quantity and quality of the population are maintained at the level that progressive national life demands.

3. It might be thought that the problem raised by changes in men's religious ideas bears little analogy to those we have been discussing. It may be said that those changes which meant the undermining of ancestor-worship, and with it of the older foundations of the family, are by this time ancient story; and the fact that the family not only survived them, but took a new lease of life from them, might appear to furnish the best evidence that it has other and deeper foundations in human nature than those which religious superstition supplied. But of course the fact is not so simple. The change that was effected was not so complete as it seemed. Large adhesions of the old superstition remained and in the course of time were worked into the new structure. It is the decay which is overtaking these under the influence of modern ideas that seems to many to convey a new threat to the family. What we believe, on the contrary, can be shown is that here, as in the case of the political and economic changes, danger comes, not from the new order of ideas, but from the blind clinging to survivals from the old. We have seen the service which the old religious ideas performed in consecrating the hearth and the head of the family. Their weakness, on the other hand, was that, as we can now see, they contained within them the principle of their own decay as the idea of family and tribal gods gave place to monotheistic conceptions. To this we must add that the consecration they gave descended,

<sup>1</sup> See Whetham, *op. cit.* p. 219, and B. Bosanquet, *Social and International Ideals*, p. 148.

not on the inner relations of the family itself, but on its outer structure as a mechanism for the performance of magical rites directed to the dead. So long as the form of continuity was preserved, the means of preserving it were comparatively a matter of indifference—with the result that, in spite of the elements in human nature which we have seen favour the permanence of the married relation, ancestor-worship has always in the end acted unfavourably upon the stability of the family. This is illustrated in the frequency of divorce and the prevalence of the custom of adoption—a legal fiction devised with the object of securing continuity—that were such prominent features of later Roman civilization, and by the case of Japan to-day, where, according to statistics, one in every six marriages is dissolved.<sup>1</sup>

In view of these facts, it might well seem an immeasurable gain when the pagan idea of the family was superseded by one that saw in marriage a union of the spirit, partaking of the nature of a God who is spirit and sharing His eternity<sup>2</sup>; in the relation of father and child, the type of God's relation to man; and in the love of children to one another the principle and promise of a new society upon earth. By this change consecration might seem to have passed inwards from the mere form to the *constitution* of the family itself. But these ideas, patent though they may be to us as involved in Christianity, were as yet in their chrysalis stage. Their development, as we all know, was checked and obstructed for centuries by the growth of a hard pupa of ecclesiastical interpretation which in reality amounted to a denial of them. The doctrine that marriage and baptism are "sacraments" is a necessary corollary of any view that finds in the spirit of the family the bond of perfectness, but to make its sacramental character depend on the authentication

<sup>1</sup> Divorce under these circumstances may almost be said to have become a national institution.

<sup>2</sup> "What *God* hath joined together, let no man put asunder" (Matt. xix. 6, Mark x. 9).



of a Church, Jewish or Christian, Catholic or Protestant, is to fall back on the old idea of magic and of "corporate" religion in the worst sense of the word.

If these remarks are well founded, it is possible from the point of view that is thus reached to see in the change that is at present undermining the ecclesiastical (or pseudo-religious) theory of marriage and the family the removal of an obstruction to the recognition of the true ground of their claim to possess a religious sanction. So far from conveying a threat to their permanence, it establishes their claim to carry their own consecration with them as the foundation-stone of the society of the future. The real danger comes from the timidity of some reformers in recognizing what is involved in the rejection of the ecclesiastical tradition and from the thoughtlessness of others who, in the heat of reaction against it, are fain to treat marriage and the family as a matter of mere temporal comfort and expediency. It is the conflict between these two forms of half-hearted acceptance of the ethical (which is also the true religious) basis of the family that is the chief source of confusion in men's minds and is so baffling to progress to-day.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> No better example of this conflict could be provided than the respective findings of the Majority and the Minority in the recent Report of the Royal Commission on Divorce (Cd. 6478, 1912). While paying verbal homage at the outset to the "interests of morality" and of "society and the State," the Majority Report, when it comes to details, confuses the issue by mixing up the question of social well-being with that of the hardship inflicted on individuals, and, while rejecting incompatibility of temper as a ground of divorce, indicates its own sympathies by a reference to the utilitarian treatment of this subject by Jeremy Bentham. It is significant from the point of view of these lectures to note that the only appeal to social philosophy in the Report is that to a writer, by whom the doctrine of the General Will, on which they are founded, would have been repudiated as a particularly pestilent form of metaphysics. The Minority lays its finger on this confusion between "the narrow expediency of trying to make the lot of certain parties concerned easier and happier," and the wider expediency of strengthening the family against influences that are threatening

§ 7. GENERAL CONCLUSION.<sup>1</sup>

We have tried to show that the new circumstances and the instability in the family which they appear to have caused while they undoubtedly portend change, are not necessarily a sign of "decline" in the family. Decline is defined by the physiologists as "the diminution of the formative activity of an organism." It has yet to be proved that the family is incapable of transforming itself to suit the new environment. The evidence that is already to hand seems rather to prove that its energies are unimpaired, that the required transformation is in the act of taking place, and that when it is accomplished we shall have a

its strength and stability. It clearly perceives that the test of all proposals to extend the grounds of divorce must be: will they make people "more careful about marrying"—"more willing to make mutual sacrifices and allowances?" On the other hand, in the single page which it devotes to the Majority proposals, it makes no real attempt to apply this test, attacking them indiscriminately with what Bentham would have called question-begging epithets, as "empirical" and "opportunist," and with unanalysed statistics. When we look for the reason of this collapse it is not difficult to find it in the inability of the Archbishop of York and his two co-signatories to emancipate themselves from the spell of what they hesitatingly call "a due regard for our Lord's teaching." We may safely leave it to theologians in countries which, like Scotland, have for centuries recognized other grounds of divorce besides adultery to reply to the charge of disloyalty to the teaching of Christ. To the lay mind it must seem that to refuse, on the ground of isolated sayings designed to meet the circumstances of the Judaic world of the first century, to see that there may be forms of unfaithfulness to the marriage vow at once more disastrous to the ends of the family, and more open to proof, than an act of adultery is to sacrifice the whole spirit of Christian teaching to the letter of Scripture. It is to be hoped when, as seems likely, in the near future Parliament takes up the question, its common sense will enable it to avoid the pitfalls which have proved disastrous to its Commissioners.

<sup>1</sup> In this section—as in one or two other parts of this lecture—I have availed myself of a paragraph from an essay on "The Family," written by myself in a volume on *Ethical Democracy*, edited by Dr. Stanton Coit, in 1900.—J.H.M.

form of family life at once more coherent and more stable than any we have yet seen. Opinion on the whole subject is much disturbed, but there is "promise in disturbance," as George Meredith calls it.

"Now seems the language heard of Love as rain  
To make a mire where fruitfulness was meant,  
The golden harp gives out a jangled strain,  
Too like revolt from heaven's Omnipotent.  
But listen to the thought; so may there come  
Conception of a newly added chord,  
Commanding space beyond where ear has home."

This is the truth of the whole matter. There are many ways in which what is hostile to the family in present tendencies may be counteracted: better homes, the raising of the standard of the family wage, the "social surgery" that may be necessary in preventing the marriage of the feeble-minded and the hopelessly phthisical or alcoholic, improved Poor Law administration. But the chief thing is to give force in all that concerns the family to the main tendency of the time—the tendency to seek for the *thought* embodied in the social forms about us, and thereby to lift them into the world of conscious purpose—in other words, to realize what is implied in the *idea* of the family as it can be at its best, and by a better system of civic education do all we can to make that idea prevail.



## CHAPTER VIII

### NEIGHBOURHOOD

#### § 1. THE MEANING OF NEIGHBOURHOOD.

THERE are no hard dividing lines between the varying spheres and forms of the individual's contact with his world. We can distinguish them by bringing before our minds the characteristic features of each institution : but we must remember that the individual is seldom conscious of a transition from one to another. No one of them exercises its influence, or shows itself as a field of service, unaffected by the others. The quality of family life, for instance, is in part determined by the wider environment which we call neighbourhood ; neighbourhood, again, is at once cause and effect of the economic organization of a region ; and in manifold ways, through that economic organization, through its equipment with public services, by participation in the political life of the nation, as well as by the subtler filaments of spiritual relationship—the neighbourhood merges into the nation and State.

Yet the neighbourhood, though perhaps the hardest to define of all social groupings, is still a significant entity. We mean by it roughly that area of social life which is contiguous to the family, on co-operation with which the family has to rely for the provision of certain services necessary to its life, and with which, as a rule, the family has a greater community of interest than it has with the wider national organization which we call the State. Contiguity in space is of the essence of the neighbourhood ; but it is not merely a matter of square miles. Neighbour-

hoods are characterized, not by their size, not even primarily by their geographical configuration, but by the kind and the intensity of social life within them. Thus, e.g., the neighbourhood of a farmer in a sparsely populated agricultural area may be wide in extent, but is often enough poor in content. He has to adjust his actions to those of other men who inhabit a considerable expanse of territory, and co-operate with them for many important purposes. He must market on the same day as they do, and arrange his work so that the instruments on which he and his neighbours rely may be available for all of them with a minimum of delay and loss. He must, too, fall in with a local organization to provide elementary education for his children, and avail himself of the local arrangements for religious worship. All these necessities bring him into relations extending over a wide area. But the very extent of the area and the usual inconvenience of transport make it difficult for social life to have that intimacy and variety which it may acquire in a more densely populated region. Friendships between small groups of houses may well be warmer and more lasting ; but one rarely finds communal undertakings on a large scale or for a great diversity of ends. And on the whole the common provision for these needs tends to be less effective than when a greater number of people co-operate to secure it. Country schools furnish an elementary education, but for more advanced or specialized work the student must migrate to some larger centre. Again, a rural Nonconformist can readily find a chapel to attend, but it may not be precisely of the denomination to which he is most attached. Here of course is the secret of the perennial attractiveness of the city to country people. The lure is the greater interest and excitement of life in the city. And the principle of it is that the greater number of individuals and therefore the greater number of co-operative enterprises within the narrower area offer the prospect of a more accurate adjustment of environment to individual interest. " There is more to do in the city " :

i.e. there are ampler opportunities for entering on associations with others which will exactly meet the individual taste. So that for every one who is dependent on a high degree of public organization to provide the instruments of his special pursuits, the city is the more attractive environment. And conversely the attraction of the country to the townsman is just that he finds fewer things ready made. He is thrown back on his own resources, and by the necessity for simplifying and concentrating his interests, he finds his way of life become more personal, and perhaps more wholesome.

These considerations are not without practical importance: but their bearing for the moment is on the meaning of "neighbourhood." It is not simply a geographical expression. It means that body of social life which belongs to a given area, and which surrounds and enters into the life of the family. Our problem now is to determine what ethical significance attaches to the individual's participation in that life.

## § 2. ETHICAL SIGNIFICANCE OF NEIGHBOURHOOD.

The main point has already been stated. In relation to his neighbourhood the citizen comes into touch with a wider world than he finds in his family life. The narrow, intimate unity of the family is in process of transition to the larger, more impersonal, but fuller life of the greater communities. The ends he serves are more objective, the good he seeks is no longer confined to those to whom he is bound by the ties of natural affection.

That it is a transition we can observe from two points of view.

1. The service of the neighbourhood retains many of the marks of service to the family. The environment into which the citizen enters is in no way remote from his personal concerns; the ends which he is led to seek are still those which he clearly envisages and appreciates, and whose importance for himself is a matter of daily experience. And this is true, not only of the countless



voluntary institutions within an area which are immediately expressive of its social desires, but equally, in their own degree, of the more firmly organized and stable institutions of local government, which fulfil many of the primary purposes of communal life. A bad water-supply or a bad provision for the education of his children is something no less striking to the ordinary citizen than the events within the family circle. He feels himself more directly affected by them than, say, by the course of the nation's foreign policy, or controversies about the constitutional powers of the various estates of the realm. Again, what he can do to improve the former bulks more largely in the result than anything he can do towards modifying the second. He may well suppose—and in most cases rightly—that his most effective contribution to and criticism of national affairs will be through the quality of life which he can help to create in his own neighbourhood. And that contribution he can make more freely, either by personal participation in the direction of various institutions or by a more discriminating exercise of his power of selecting representatives. That was the secret of the vivid democratic life of the Greek city-states. They were simply neighbourhoods. One knew with some exactness the man for whom one cast one's vote, and one's opinion on a matter of public debate had some chance of making itself heard. These conditions cannot obtain now in relation to the highest provinces of State activity. But they may obtain, in greater or less degree, in the organization of one's own neighbourhood.

2. The institutions of the neighbourhood, then, are accessible, and entry into them is natural and easy. At the same time, the neighbourhood is not self-complete, but evidently leads out and on to the life of a still larger community. Each neighbourhood has its own distinctive features and problems; but none of these severs it absolutely in any single respect from the wider world in which it is set. Its interests and the duties which it imposes involve relations to other neighbourhoods and to the wider

grouping which comprehends them. On the economic side, for instance, the neighbourhood is a part of a very complex organism. Many of the necessities of its life are drawn from other areas ; it, in turn, contributes something to them. So close, indeed, has this economic network become that it is apt to destroy any sense of neighbourhood in industry and commerce. Manchester may feel more concern about the state of the Indian cotton crop, or Birmingham about the latest American design of an aeroplane engine, than about many events within its own borders. At any rate, it is clear that neighbourhoods are not self-contained economic unities. And similarly with regard to the provision of the necessary public utilities. Glasgow cannot prospect for its water-supply without considering how its schemes affect the amenities of West Perthshire and the prosperity of the towns of the Forth basin. Or again, a successful educational experiment, or a notable improvement in the health or transport or architecture of any one area, reacts on the direction of these matters everywhere else. In a word, the enterprise of a neighbourhood—the enrichment and dignifying of the life which is possible within it—demands for its achievement an effort of the same kind over the whole of a wider area. Hence devotion to the ends of communal life, so far as these are realizable within a neighbourhood, inevitably implies some concern for the attainment of these ends in all areas of similar civilization.

Such, in principle, is the place which participation in the life of the neighbourhood plays in the growth of the citizen's will and purpose. And such in principle is the argument for the development of strong centres of local life within the unity of the nation-State. It is a familiar point. On its political side it is the case for a large measure of devolution of control from central to local government. But it is more than simply a political case. The political movement is the outcome of an authentic spiritual need which must fulfil itself in other ways. We have not yet discussed the relation of the political

institution to those other institutions in which man's individuality finds its instruments and expression. But the conclusion may be given in a word. We hold the State to be fundamental in the sense that it is the condition of the adequate realization of all social purposes. But it is at the same time not the whole. The whole is the full development of human life: i.e. the free attainment of all man's most serious interests—in religion, in art, in knowledge, and in goodness. Unless these things are the fruits of the moralizing of men within their political groupings, the best of life is lost. And these fruits of the spirit, as we have abundantly seen, need the cultivation of many minds. Such cultivation is, in part at least, an affair of neighbourhood. If all of these interests transcend any single community, yet all of them require local habitations and domains. The master minds in any one of them may be citizens of the city of God; but the environment out of which they spring is some earthly and visible community. And the progress of man in any of these things is the work, not only of the great heroic figures, but of the small communities of men who live together, and whose sustained and concerted effort gives a new direction to the life of their neighbourhoods.

It seems as if we might say that there are two sorts of greatness open to men. One is the greatness of individual achievement—the greatness of Pericles, or of Shakespeare, or of Napoleon. The other is communal greatness, the devotion of a people's life to some idea, or the enjoyment by the community of a high level of artistic achievement,—the greatness of Athens or of Florence. The two kinds are not, indeed, antithetic to one another. For the great individual springs from the great community, though he transcends it and is not merely its product. And on the other hand, we can hardly conceive a high level of communal life which was not crowned and made expressive for all time by the work of some individual genius. Yet it is well to distinguish them: for the second is the more fundamental. A solitary master, even if he were possible,



would not himself give greatness to his age : but a great age may fairly hope to produce the great man. And to some extent the conditions of communal greatness are within our power. We cannot, by taking thought, endow ourselves with a Shakespeare ; but, by taking thought, we can make a community worthy of a Shakespeare ; and if we do that, it matters relatively little whether we get him or not. And this work can be begun, can perhaps best be begun, by intensifying the life of small communities. Great movements, however rapidly they have spread, have always been local in origin. The elements of such a renaissance are all to hand. There is no region entirely devoid of the material from which to elicit a genuine spiritual life. It is, in the main, a matter of education. Men have only to realize the possibilities latent in the circumstances of their common life—the opportunities even of their difficulties, and the resources with which Nature and tradition have endowed them. First they must transform their material environment into a fit habitation for human souls—as fine an avenue of social purpose, and therefore as finely spiritual a work as any to which a community can lay its hand. Inevitably from its powers and heritage, some further mode of expression will appear. It may be by the natural arts of building or design, or by the exercise and increment of a long-inherited craftsmanship, or by music or the cultivation of characteristic literary and artistic forms, or by a nobly wrought scheme of civic institutions—in some of these ways the indwelling spirit of their life together will find outlet and embodiment. The source of all civic greatness is the kindling of the individual's care for the common achievement. And, as a rule, it is easier for him to feel the stirrings of this wider life when it comes to him through the neighbourhood where familiarity may merge into love, than through a greater but more austere unit.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Social analysis is, perhaps, not yet far enough advanced to enable us to offer scientific instances of the tendencies which are discussed above. But it is a notable and instructive fact that

§ 3. PROBLEMS OF NEIGHBOURHOOD IN TOWN  
AND COUNTRY.

If, then, each neighbourhood has in it the possibility of its own special form of life, there are no lines of development which can be prescribed for all alike. But it may be useful to discriminate two main types of problems—those of rural and those of urban areas. Not, indeed, that every neighbourhood can be placed decisively into one or other of these categories, or that any neighbourhood belongs wholly to one and not to the other. There are all kinds of intermediate stages ; and the life of a rural community affects and is affected by that of the city which is its centre. But roughly, the distinction is between an area in which the majority live by the established arts and crafts of human life, and where changes in the number of inhabitants, being the product of slowly operating natural causes, are not rapid : and, on the other hand, an area to which the organization of great industrial enterprises has attracted a large population, and one therefore which is subject to rapid increase by immigration. In the one case, the problem is mainly to devise or improve

Scotland and Ireland, with their distinctively national traditions and institutions, have furnished political and intellectual leaders to the Empire in numbers out of all proportion to their populations. And contemporary observers might find some connection between the recent emergence of Welsh political leaders and the very remarkable renaissance of Welsh national life. One could hardly find more splendid manifestations of the spirit of a community than in the magnificent buildings of the National Library and the National Museum, in the national organizations for public health, and in the revival of Welsh poetry. Again, we have heard often enough recently that the great men of Germany have not been from Prussia, but from the smaller nationalities incorporated in the Empire ; and if that is true, the point is not without relevance here. And it is quite possible that if the analysis of origin were carried further, certain areas within Scotland or Ireland or Wales, or any other country might be found to be more productive of leaders than others, and these areas precisely those in which the breath of local life blows most strongly.

the instruments of communal life. For, in the country, as a rule, in spite of its narrowness and occasional poverty, contact with the soil issues in some sense of locality and a traditional interest in local things.<sup>1</sup> But, in England at least, effective institutions which concentrate and sustain that interest are apt to be few and inaccessible and difficult to manage. In the city, on the other hand, the instruments of local life are sufficiently abundant: but the feeling for local concerns has often been lost, or is still undeveloped. The problem in this case is to bring life into what is, for many within the area, simply external mechanism.

Both problems have received considerable attention; but, partly through defective analysis, the problem of the rural area has generally been thought to be the harder. It is, in fact, not so. For instruments are easier to fashion than enlightened will: and wherever the rural problem has been approached by imaginative intelligence, it has come reasonably near solution. The work of Sir Horace Plunkett, Mr. George Russell (A. E.) and their colleagues on the Irish Agricultural Organization Society is a very striking example of the restoration of real material and spiritual health to as difficult an area as exists within these islands.

The problem of the city is more difficult: for it is, in effect, that of arousing a genuine civic consciousness. And, by a certain irony, precisely those conditions which the rural area must try to produce for itself and which, in the long run, are favourable conditions in the city as well, are yet in some ways hostile to the growth of its sense of neighbourhood. The very multiplicity of institutions is apt to exercise a segregating influence. Men find their own particular interests excellently served; and in their attachment to the institutions with which they identify themselves they may forget the common life out of which

<sup>1</sup> The close contact into which the war has brought us with local French institutions has enabled us to appreciate the value of the village Mairie.



these spring. Again, facility of transit is a dominant necessity of rural social life ; yet in its own way it militates against a unity of social experience in the city ; for where men's lives are wholly centred in one area, the sense of kinship with the area grows more rapidly. But for an increasing number business and home interests lie in widely distant parts. Residential suburbs spring up outside the boundaries of every large city ; and between the life of the prosperous minority and that of the majority who cannot afford to migrate a gulf is fixed. The latter know little more of the former than that they are anxious to escape from the environment of their less fortunate fellows ; and the former are easily tempted to be careless of the problems of the city which is for them merely the source of their livelihood. More than that, of course, this division of interests affects even the community of the suburbs. A community which sets out primarily to be a place of ease and pleasant surroundings, and which is more or less divorced from the daily occupation of most of its adult inhabitants, does not readily achieve integrity of life.<sup>1</sup>

For this problem there is no single or simple solution. But if progress will almost necessarily be slow, its direction is fairly manifest. It is a matter of the education of public will, intelligence, and imagination : and the channels of that education are mainly the institutions which already exist. As the interest which is embodied in each of them becomes more widely spread and deeper, they will bring

<sup>1</sup> An example may be given, again with all due sense of the possible qualification which fuller investigation might necessitate. Sheffield seems to have succeeded better than most rapidly growing cities in making " Sheffielders " of its inhabitants ; and this is probably due in part to the fact that Sheffield has no suburbs. The encircling ring of hills prevents the laying out of suburbs in the ordinary way ; and one is perfectly vividly aware, even in the western outskirts, that one is *in* Sheffield, not just near it. This is true also of Birmingham, where the proximity of its chief suburb of Edgbaston has been a manufacture in providing the " local patriotism " for which that city is famous.

within their influence a greater range and variety of feeling : and by that very process become more responsive to local needs. And each of them, in its own way, will find itself the repository of some part of the tradition and life of the neighbourhood. There is, indeed, nothing unfamiliar in this. As we saw in Chapter VI, institutions serve not only to objectify an attained level of common will, but to encourage that will into new and firmer growth. We may fairly hope, therefore, that if public authorities and voluntary institutions alike set themselves consciously to engage more of the interest of the citizens, and to direct it to the study of local problems, a deeper and finer community of life is within the power of every area. Schools especially have a great service to render. They can introduce their pupils to whatever of interest there may be in the neighbourhood ; and can study the natural forces that help to shape the destinies of men as these are revealed in their own vicinity. And, implicitly at least, they can give some perception of the possibilities of the future, and deepen the sense of the part which the citizens themselves are called upon to take in their realization.

#### NOTE ON REGIONALISM AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT.

It seems desirable, without attempting any exhaustive discussion, to call attention to a movement which is significant of the growing concern for the revival of that healthy and vigorous life in neighbourhoods which we have been desiderating. The movement seems to have adopted the name of Regionalism : and readers who are interested will find it brilliantly expounded in the civic studies of Professor Patrick Geddes, especially in the series of books entitled *The Making of the Future*. The movement is hard to characterize : for it touches contemporary thought and practice at many points. That itself is proof of its vitality and importance. It is partly philosophical, in its plea that the analytic work of the

sciences should be simply the preliminary to a constructive synthesis ; partly educational, partly economic, and partly political. Its central inspiration would appear to be reaction from mechanism. Machinery, it is argued, has come so to dominate every realm of human activity, that man is in danger of sacrificing his own interests and qualities to the efficiency and prosperity of his instrument.<sup>1</sup> The indictment is most clear, perhaps, in the sphere of industry, where machine production has displaced many of the arts and crafts by the exercise of which the manual worker could once acquire some fine skill of hand and brain. Hence, so far as the economic proposals of the Regionalists can be definitely ascertained, they seem to amount to an advocacy of a return to a more primitive industrial system. Some consideration of this proposal will be found in the following chapter.

On the political side the protest is equally emphatic against the apparently mechanical oppression of the State, and the excessive influence exercised by the great political capitals of Europe. The State—so runs the contention—even where its purposes are wholly good, is too large a unit effectively to enter into the lives of its members except in the simplest, even the crudest, way. Its size compels it to work by rule of rote. It is therefore incapable of any fineness of adjustment or of a sympathetic handling of the infinitely varied interests and ideals of human life. It must rely entirely on the highly centralized machinery of an officialdom, and try to impose a flat

<sup>1</sup> " Since the Industrial Revolution there has gone on an organized sacrifice of men to things, a large-scale subordination of life to machinery. . . . Things have been in the saddle and ridden mankind. The cult of force in statecraft has been brought to logical perfection in Prussian 'frightfulness.' The cult of 'profiteering' in business has had a similar goal in the striving for monopoly by ruthless elimination of rivals. Prussianism and profiteering are thus twin evils. Historically they have risen together. Is it not possible they are destined to fall together before the rising tide of a new vitalism ? "—Introduction to *The Coming Polity*, by P. Geddes and V. Branford.



sameness on every unit with which it deals. Sooner or later, the machine forces its mechanical aims on those who control it ; and the life of the State assumes a rigidity of inner constitution and outer direction which can only end in internal or external violence.<sup>1</sup> If, then, we wish to restore a more wholesome and human kind of civilization to this conflict-ridden world, we must loosen the ties of the State and of the capital, and return to a system of political organization in which power will be less centralized, and where the smaller natural areas of communal life, each with its distinctive traditions and resources, will enlist and control in far more intimate ways the willing service of their members.

There is no denying the force of such a criticism. It applies, of course, to other institutions than the State. Much of the recent history of trade unionism, e.g., is undoubtedly the outcome of a reaction among many unionists against the mechanization of their own organizations, and the resulting effort of the unions to meet these difficulties. Our main discussion of the point here raised must be postponed until we have considered the nature and functions of the State. But the subject is so vital not only to the preceding chapter but to the whole argument of this book, that it is worth while, even at the risk of some repetition, to try to discriminate what is valid in this line of thought.

<sup>1</sup> Very recently a passionate protest against the dominance of the State has been written by Sir Rabindranath Tagore. "I ask you what disaster has there been in the history of man, in its darkest period, like this terrible disaster of the Nation fixing its fangs deep into the naked flesh of the world, taking permanent precaution against its natural relaxation? You, the people of the West, who have manufactured this abnormality, . . . can you put yourself into the position of the peoples who seem to have been doomed to an eternal damnation of their own humanity, who not only must suffer continual curtailment of their manhood, but even raise their voices in pæans of praise for the benignity of a mechanical apparatus in its interminable parody of providence." By "Nation" here, Sir Rabindranath Tagore means the institution which we call the "State."

There is, in the first place, no absolute criterion of greatness and smallness which can properly be applied to any institution. The real question as to size is the determination of the point at which an institution becomes too great (or too small) to fulfil the purpose which is its inspiration and *raison d'être*. The Regionalist view presumably is that the State has grown beyond this point ; that real community of political life is no longer possible among its members. Aristotle might well be called as a witness for such a view ; but in the last resort it must be proved or disproved by an analysis of all the facts and ideals of present-day political life. Evidently such an analysis requires that we should be quite clear as to what the ends of political organizations really are. It would be wrong to urge as a decisive objection to the modern State that its life is not the throbbingly beautiful thing that for a brief time was achieved in fifth-century Athens. For we must first consider whether the modern State is not in some essential respects a higher embodiment of the ends of political life. If it is—as many lovers of Greece have argued—it becomes a question whether that advance has been won at too great a price, whether we have not lost more than we have gained.

However we answer this question, it is clear that we must ask it. And there is, perhaps, a presumption against the validity of this criticism in the fact that the enlarging of institutions like the State and trade unions is no accident. They have assumed their present form under the constraint of a logic of events which seemed to their controlling minds to compel the recognition that only as greater units could they effectively attain their purposes. Justice and security are parts at least of the ends for which the State exists : and they are best achieved when large homogeneous populations are assembled under one allegiance. It is possible, indeed probable, that the better provision for these ends will require the creation of still greater sovereignties in the form of supra-national organizations. So with trade unions. They have found that

the economic pressure which is their final weapon could not be effectively wielded without their consolidation into very large organizations. If this reading of the past evolution of these institutions is true, the criticism of them on the ground of mere size or mechanism is correspondingly weakened. That increase in size is almost inevitably accompanied by increase in mechanization is possibly a disability attaching to human finitude, though this is far from the whole truth.<sup>1</sup> But to discredit the State on the simple ground of size or of mechanism is arid criticism. It is as if one rejected the best instruments of his communal purposes which man, with all his limitations of knowledge and power, has been able to devise, merely because some better is abstractly possible. An abstract possibility is very different from a real possibility, and will not bear to be made the sole criterion of actual fact.

On the other hand, we must not forget that we have lost something. And our recognition of the power of circumstance to limit the possibilities which are in fact open to us at any given moment of time, must not be suffered to excuse any complacency or neglect to make the most of the opportunities which we have. It is, therefore, all the more important that we should make clear to ourselves precisely where we do stand and investigate any suggestions that seem to promise a real advance. We may not admit the whole indictment against the State; but we may well be convinced of the real importance of transferring specific functions from central to local government. We have argued <sup>2</sup> that some degree of mechanization, i.e. of habituated action, is not harmful to a community, is indeed necessary to its continuous development. But, here, as elsewhere, there is a limiting point. Moralized habit is always subject to the scrutiny and control of an intelligence surveying the major ends of life and discerning means thereto. When such scrutiny fails, habit becomes mere routine. It is possible, therefore, that habit and

<sup>1</sup> Cf. above, p. 122, and also p. 239 et seq.

<sup>2</sup> See p. 122.



mechanism may assume too heavy a part in the direction of life: and for health and vigour we require a more conscious and critical perception of the ends which habit is intended to serve. And if there is danger of too much routine in the management of communal life, we have need of every measure which makes for the more direct and illuminative individual contact with the concerns of the community.

There is, then, no antagonism between the recognition of the function of the organizing mind of the State, and the worth of the purposes which it embodies, and the desire to restore a vivid and satisfying life in regions. The practical influence of the Regionalists in the way of detailed suggestion and criticism—and especially in their proposals to make the spirit of a region operative throughout its whole educational enterprise—is bound to be helpful. If our contention in the preceding chapter is sound, we may fairly accept the principle that where the ends of common life can be as well secured by local effort and control as by the agency of the State, there is every reason for entrusting them to the smaller unit. We should be well content to sacrifice some administrative “efficiency,” and certainly some economic gain, if by a greater measure of local autonomy a larger number of citizens were brought to feel their own personal interest in the things of their common life. Neighbourhoods which are living centres of civic thought and feeling will be strongholds of devotion to the ideals of the State and of humanity.

## CHAPTER IX

### THE INDUSTRIAL SYSTEM

#### § 1. INDUSTRY AS AN INSTITUTION.

INSTITUTIONS the end of which is to maintain and enhance individual life are capable of a rough division into those concerned with material or physical well-being and those concerned with spiritual development. How rough this division is, and how fluid the distinction between the various kinds of institutions will be plain enough as we proceed. For the real problem which confronts us in dealing with the industrial system is not its sufficiency or insufficiency to fill the part which is evidently to be assigned to it—the provision of the means of physical maintenance—but the question of how far that function is or can be made contributory to the spiritual health of the individuals engaged in it. In other words, what we are driven to require from industry is not simply that it shall fulfil one partial requirement of human life, but that it shall contribute in some degree to the sanity and completeness of the whole. Here, as everywhere, there can be no ultimate divorce between man's physical and his spiritual life. And the fact that in our judgment of industry we are compelled to pass from the criterion of material wealth to that of spiritual welfare is but one further illustration of the central thesis of these lectures—the transforming power of the mind of man, and the necessity that is laid upon him to make of every need and condition of his life, however primary or even primitive, an element in a scheme of values which is spiritual in character. Nothing

is *merely* necessitated. For whatever things are essential conditions of life, and therefore so far necessitated, can at the same time become constituents of the good life, and therein instruments of freedom and human value.

At first sight it seems strange to regard industry as an institution. An institution, we said, is created by and creative of character and will. And nothing in the world seems to be less the outcome of character or less adapted to its development than the industrial system of a great manufacturing country. It is true that in historic fact the beginning of our modern industrial system was a series of human inventions, and that its present foundation is the skill of man, his capacity for organization and for applying to the business of satisfying his wants the accumulated resources which nature offers him. In that sense, no doubt, industry is the creation of the mind of man. On the other hand, the necessity for an industry of some sort is not chosen by man but laid upon him by the conditions of his life ; and when we look a little more deeply into the history of an industrial system, it may seem that its evolution has been motived by a necessity as inexorable as that which first ordained "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread till thou return unto the ground." Man's many inventions are but his responses to the goadings of his need and the suggestions of his environment ; and industry seems to have moved in a path of its own, following out the lines of its own development, careless of the mutilation that it inflicts on countless men by forcing them into a mould that they did not choose. To some this seems the plainest and profoundest truth ; and in one school of social writers it has been made the starting-point of a certain historical materialism. All social development is viewed as determined throughout by the brute pressure of economic needs : the whole intellectual and moral history of man as the outcome of economic conditions which he cannot alter, and every human activity as dependent upon and subordinate to the economic framework of the existing society. And even if we do not accept



this view, it is plain enough that our industrial system is not wholly the product of the foresight and will of man. We can hardly think that he would willingly have created a system so apparently hostile to his higher interests, and so repressive of all the springs of character.

Why, then, do we call it an institution? Just for the reason that, hard saying as it seems, industry satisfies the above-mentioned conditions of institutional life. In the first place while initially forms of industry, like those of animals, may be said to owe their origin to instinct, the instinct is from the first that of a rational "tool-using" animal and has already the promise and potency of the self reference which, we saw, was the principle of will.<sup>1</sup> Hence that the origin of industry was not chosen—any more than was the origin of the family—does not prevent its becoming an element in the world which man's will creates for him. It is the instrument for the satisfaction of the needs of his physical life; and as such is no longer merely external to him, but of a piece with the environment which his will, operating within the conditions prescribed by nature, has built as its home. However urgent his physical needs may be, they are never mere compulsions impinging on man from without. They have to undergo the transforming process of relation to himself, as he is and as he wants to be. In the second place, the kind of industrial system which he thinks it worth while to *maintain* depends on the place which he assigns in the general scheme of his life to the satisfaction of his desire for physical sustenance, comfort, or even luxury. It is quite true that we could modify or change fundamentally our industrial system only at the cost of such a diminution in our wealth, such

<sup>1</sup> This of course is the decisive answer to the materialistic view of history above referred to. Granted that economic needs are the main factor in social development (though nothing is further from the truth), in human life these needs take the form of *desires* which are only possible to a being "of large discourse who looks before and behind" (cf. Bosanquet, *Social and International Ideals*, Lecture XII, p. 250).

a reduction of the total of goods and services now at the disposal of man, such a lowering of our standards of comfort and a sacrifice of the leisure we enjoy, that very few of us are seriously willing to face it. But that only means that we are reluctant to revise our conception of the place of these things in human life. If we willed it—as many individuals and communities have done—there is no doubt that we could devise an industrial system which from many points of view would be ethically more satisfactory. It is, therefore, not unfair to argue that the present industrial order maintains itself because we will that it should.

In the third place, industry is evidently creative of character. The occupations in which a man spends most of his waking hours, and the return which he gets for his work, are more powerful determinants of the quality of his life than almost any other influence. "Man's character," writes Professor Marshall, "has been moulded by his every-day work, and the material resources which he thereby procures more than by any other influence, unless it be that of his religious ideals; and the two great forming agencies of the world's history have been the religious and the economic."<sup>1</sup> What is questionable is not the fact but the direction of its influence on character. It is here, as we shall see, that modern forms of industry present their deepest problems.

## § 2. THE ETHICAL VALUES OF INDUSTRY.

Industry, therefore, is institutional in character; and it is important to realize the ethical values, positive and negative, that attach to it. First in the scale of these values we may place that arising from the obvious but often forgotten fact, that industry is the essential foundation of society. Every higher achievement of society depends on industry just as certainly as every spiritual attainment of the individual depends on his physical body. The artist or the man of letters, who adds to the imperish-

<sup>1</sup> *Principles of Economics*, p. 1.

able riches of his people, is made possible, in the last resort, by industry. There have been men who were able both to earn a livelihood by the work of their hands and at the same time to cultivate fine gifts of imagination or intellect. But their number is necessarily small; and the great advances that have been made in the arts and sciences have come mainly from that class in the community which has enjoyed leisure and the opportunity to devote themselves to their chosen pursuits. The scholar, the musician, the poet, the school-teacher, the minister—all of these and many others are occupations which are leisured, and which necessarily must be so, in some degree, if they are to accomplish their best work. We mean by "leisured," not that they offer ample time for personal enjoyment, but just that those engaged on them are released from the necessity of contributing directly to the supply of the necessities of life. If every individual, or rather to take the natural unit, if every family attempted to be self-sufficient, to provide for all its own necessities and live its own self-contained life, there would be an end certainly to nearly all the more purely intellectual and æsthetic activities. Nature is a niggardly foster-mother—at least in these northern lands—and the production of its own food and clothing and shelter would more than suffice to exhaust all the energy of every family. But what has happened in effect is this. Man lighted on the principle which we now call the Division of Labour; i.e. he put into practice the obvious truth that a man who does one thing many times becomes more expert, and therefore more productive, in that activity than if he did many different things. The first real increase of wealth<sup>1</sup> in the human community must have been when the group contrived to assign to each of its members a more or less special function—some to build, some to till the soil.

<sup>1</sup> It is not suggested that the principle of Division of Labour was consciously applied at some point of time. Every community of which we have any knowledge was to some extent organized on this basis.



some to look after the cattle. By the greater expertness of each specialized workman the total product of the primitive industry and therefore the share of each member would be increased. Each is better off, through his specialization and co-operation with others, than if he had attempted to do everything for himself. Still further specialization results in greater production, until at length the community produces more than it actually need consume: and this surplus of production over consumption is the beginning of capital goods. With the application of capital in the form of improved tools, or better cultivation, production increases rapidly; and at length it becomes possible for the community to release a certain number of its members from the necessity of productive work altogether. It assigns to them other tasks—to sing, or to preach, or to teach. Every human society of which we have any record has been able to set apart a class for such purposes; but the class becomes greater with the development of more powerful and productive industrial methods. It is unfortunately true that many of those whom our social economy has absolved from the duty of industrial work are not in the least aware of what their absolution means, or of their duty to restore to the community in the form of services what they draw from it in the shape of the goods and services of others. It is an urgent piece of social reform to reduce the number of those who are merely unprofitable consumers—the *fruges consumere nati*. Nevertheless this need not obscure the essential truth that all who are devoting themselves to the higher duties of social life can do so only because the great productiveness of modern industry provides for them the elementary material conditions of life. Were industry less specialized fewer of us would be exempt for the task of supplying for ourselves what we eat and drink and put on. We *earn* these things now; but we do not *make* them for ourselves; and we must recognize that the fashion of our earning them is made possible by industry.

A second point follows of prime ethical significance—that by his industry a man acquires a standing in the world. He contributes to the store from which the whole society draws its sustenance; he gives something without which nothing else could exist. He has the right to stand four-square before the world, requiring from others, in virtue of his service to them, the things which he does not make for himself. It is the beginning of a new attitude to the world—the sense that without work like his, the world could not sustain its life, that he has his place in the endless process of creating and recreating the resources of human life. “Does not the very ditcher and delver with his spade extinguish many a thistle and puddle; and so leave a little order where he found the opposite?”<sup>1</sup> Participation in industry, therefore, is a man’s title to self-respect and to the respect of others, without which no mature moral life can even begin to be. From this point of view there is a genuine ethical significance in a claim of which we used to be constantly reminded—the claim for the Right to Work. It is a very different claim from that for maintenance in time of distress. As a matter of fact every civilized society, in some way or another, recognizes this latter claim; and what the former requires is that society should provide within the limits of its organizing power, the opportunity whereby that maintenance should be honourably earned. It is, in effect, a moral demand: that the individual should have not only the means of life, but the conditions of personal integrity.

Again, apart from the ethical importance of such participation in the work of industry, the actual process of industry itself has a direct bearing on character. One of the commonplaces of social philosophy is that industry, as a discipline of the will and a means of developing intelligence in individuals and communities, is no curse but a blessing to humanity. But, in simple fact, the situation

<sup>1</sup> Carlyle, *Sartor Resartus*, ii 4. Cf. also iii 4: “Two men I honour, and no third,” etc.

of our modern world, from this point of view, is very far from being satisfactory ; and the wider the view we take of the moral life the less can we be content with the industrial position as it is to-day. If it were a question merely of breaking in the wandering thought and will by tying it down to necessary tasks, the discipline of industry could be regarded as, on the whole, a very fair training in the ways of morality. It gives ample room at least for the practice of obedience. But if we think of the good of man as not simply the fulfilment of tasks imposed on him from without, but as the realization of all the capacities latent in his nature, the enjoyment and free exercise of all the powers with which he is endowed, then industry seems a poor school of character and preparation for happiness. The opportunity that it offers seems so "meagre out of all proportion to man's potentialities as a moral being."<sup>1</sup> The very specialization of function by which the store of material wealth and even the store of spiritual wealth has been so greatly increased has condemned the great mass of our workers to a life of such monotony that they are in no way fit to enjoy the spiritual riches which have crowned the productiveness of their own industry. Much of the normal work of industry, and nearly all unskilled work, is sheer hard physical labour, which leaves the worker too exhausted to attempt in his scanty leisure anything more satisfying to him. And this is not the worst evil. The real tragedy is that men and women have to spend day after day in such simple routine uninspiring tasks that not merely is bodily strength exploited but intellectual and moral alertness and sensibility are dulled and even extinguished. There is nothing in the whole course of many an industrial life to call forth the creative energies of man, nothing to develop mind and will in the higher sense. Most of his experience drives in the other way. Living his life among machinery, man finds himself reduced almost to the level of the tools with which he works. He seldom enough

<sup>1</sup> MacCunn, *The Making of Character*, p. 118.



has even the stimulus of personal contact with an employer who thinks of him as a human being. He is one among such a vast number, that even where the employer is not himself an employé, working in the interests of a board of management representing a remote body of shareholders, there is no opportunity for individual intercourse. The worker is one factor—rather more troublesome perhaps than the other factors—in a complex production process ; and the employer not seldom frankly regards him as such.

Add to this the paralysing sense that the management of his industry is in quite other hands than his own, and is directed by them in obedience to the impersonal forces either of competitive supply and demand, or of capitalistic monopoly, and we can understand how unfavourably the position of the ordinary industrial workman of to-day contrasts with that of the artisan or handicraftsman of two centuries ago. He, at least, was responsible for carrying out the whole of a given task. He saw the end of his work from the beginning ; and sometimes working with fairly rude instruments, he could exercise initiative in planning and contriving and finding means to ends. Therein he had an opportunity for self-expression, for the exercise of mind and will in his work. He could create a beautiful thing, or at any rate a thing which he could display as *his* work, and could feel to be the product of his own craftsmanship. He might be poorly paid, but his work was dignified and worthy of human power. It was life, not merely a livelihood. We are apt, possibly, to forget the heavy disabilities that attached to the craftsman's life, and his poverty. Yet it is symptomatic of the main charge that has been laid against modern industrialism that the name as well as the idea of the projected new order has been drawn from this mediaeval Guild system.

### § 3. NEW MOVEMENTS IN INDUSTRY.

It is these grave features of modern industry that have inspired an insistent demand for radical reform ; and the

whole situation is changing with such extraordinary rapidity—especially under the pressure of conditions imposed by the war—that it is impossible to pretend to any finality of statement or of judgment about it. All that we can attempt is to set down the main points of the indictment against the present order, and indicate the various directions in which change is contemplated. It is not our province here to examine the many important (but subordinate) questions of economic practice which are relevant to the discussion of each of these points of view. Our concern is solely with the values, and especially with the ethical values, which they promise for the social life of the world. And for that purpose we must be content to present the issues as broadly as possible.

The complaint, as we have seen, is twofold. First there is the monotony of occupation and the confinement of a human being of varied powers and interests to one routine task. There is also the exclusion of the vast majority of workers from any real control or responsibility in the management of their industry. These two lines of criticism are summed up in the attack on the wage-system. What is wrong is not so much the wages are small, as just that they are wages. They are the payments made to a man by an employer who hires him to fit himself into the manufacturing process like any other factor of production. The employer alone understands the structure of an industry, exercises the directing power, and appreciates the social value of the work which his industry is doing. He discriminates the different tasks, and decides how they shall be done, setting one man to one and another to another. He regulates the conditions of work; and when the process is finished, disposes of the product as he thinks fit. The employer, in all this, is discharging a function of the utmost social importance—the most difficult and harassing task in industry. On his foresight and organizing skill depends the harmonious co-operation of all the factors of production. But it is precisely because it is a noble function

that intelligent artisans are beginning to resent their exclusion from it. They wish to share this high responsibility. No doubt the ablest of them, under present conditions, naturally rise to the rank of managers. But that, in itself, is not a remedy for the situation. What is desired is that the direction of an industry shall be the affair of *all* the members of that industry, so to speak, *ex officio*; that they, as producers, i.e. as men who spend the greater part of their time and strength in an industry, should have, as part of their normal share in it, the right and the responsibility of participating in the finest and highest of its duties.

Now it is noticeable that in the development of this demand one side of the original indictment tends to be overlooked. The difficulties which were felt were, first, monotony of task, and second, exclusion from control. But the emphasis, so far, has fallen mainly on the second. And we shall find that the clue to the differences between the various reformist suggestions which have been put forward, is just the difference in weight attached to the two points. Where impatience of monotony and the desire to restore a more varied and interesting industrial life are strongly marked, the schemes of amelioration at bottom amount to a reversal of our whole industrial evolution. It is clear that so long as we maintain large-scale industry, we maintain thereby extreme specialization of function, and therefore essentially monotony. In the long run the only way to get rid of monotony is to revert to a much more primitive, and much less productive, economic order. On the other hand, a much greater degree of democratic control is perfectly compatible with the maintenance of large industries: and the chief reason why the reformist movement in this country has concerned itself mainly with this side of the problem is that it has assumed the permanence of great industrial organizations.<sup>1</sup> We may distinguish, then, four proposed

<sup>1</sup> Perhaps, too, it is guided by an instinctive perception of the fact that the best method of attacking the worst forms of monotony



lines of reform. The first, prominent both in France and in Russia where large-scale industry has not established itself so comprehensively as in this country, urges the return to a system of small-scale production. Its ideal is the small rural community, which will from within itself produce all the primary requisites of human life.<sup>1</sup> The second, which is quite at the opposite extreme, is the Syndicalist or Industrial Unionist<sup>2</sup> movement. It contemplates the continuance of great industries, but claims that all the fixed capital of each industry should belong to and be controlled by a great national Trade Union or Guild embracing all the operatives concerned. Managers will be elected exactly as Trade Union officials are now: so that the ultimate responsibility for all questions of industrial policy reverts to the rank and file of the members. Each industry will be self-governed and self-contained, except in so far as it will consult with other industries in an "Industrial Parliament" as to the amount and kind of goods that will be required from each for the satisfaction of the needs of the community of all producers. And this "Industrial Parliament" will replace all existing organs of political life. Whatever concerns are common to all industries will be regulated by it, all other conditions of life will be settled by the various Trade Unions.<sup>3</sup> The third scheme is that called Guild Socialism.<sup>4</sup> It accepts much of the Syndicalist machinery as regards the control of industry, but in conformity with the classical Socialist

is through an organization of labour which, by a juster system of remuneration, will remove the temptation to set men and women to work that can be performed by machinery.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Kropotkin's *Fields, Factories, and Workshops*.

<sup>2</sup> Exponents of these views argue that there is a distinction between these two names and movements. But if there is, it is extraordinarily fine; and the main position, certainly, is common to both.

<sup>3</sup> The chief representatives of the Syndicalist view are, in France, such writers as Pataud, Pouget, and Lagardelle; in this country the pamphlets of the Syndicalist League, and of the advanced wing of the South Wales Miners' Federation. <sup>4</sup> Or National Guilds.

doctrine it maintains not only that the ownership of the means of production should be in the hands of the State, but also that the State should be associated with, though not predominant over, the Trade Unions in the management of industry. The Trade Union manages an industry with some direct reference to the welfare of the whole of society. Further, Guild Socialists recognize that there are other common interests than the industrial: so that Parliament, or some similar organ of political life, holds an essential place in their economy.<sup>1</sup> There is, finally, a school which holds that while the policy of the Guild Socialists is the only immediately practicable policy, the ultimate aim of reform should be to replace the great national guilds by local guilds—apparently an attempt to reach the ideal of the small production unit by means of the national guild.<sup>2</sup>

#### § 4. EXAMINATION OF TENDENCIES.

We need not here attempt any close discussion of each of these four forms; but it may be convenient if we consider the main tendency indicated by them, and especially by the second and third. We select these two not because they are intrinsically more interesting, but because they are making much more rapid headway and exercising a greater influence on industrial organization in this country than the others we have mentioned. The reason has already been given. It is because they assume the continuance of large-scale production: and either because the change to small-scale production is too great for our ordinary imagination, or because we are unwilling to accept the reduction in material goods, and in our standards of comfort which such a change would necessarily involve, that assumption is common to most of our writers on industrial reform.

Further, we are not concerned with questions of practica-

<sup>1</sup> Typical writers are Mr. A. R. Orage (editor of the *New Age*), and Mr. G. D. H. Cole.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. for this doctrine, Mr. A. J. Pentty's *Old Worlds for New*.

bility. In the last resort, the practicability of this new industrial order depends partly on whether a democratic industry could produce the trained skill to fulfil the difficult function of the employer—there is no reason to suppose that it could not—and partly on whether or not there is a high enough level of discipline and loyalty among the workers to ensure their acceptance of the decisions of their own elected managers—a point on which trade union experience is not altogether reassuring. The cash-nexus is not perhaps an organic filament of the most enduring and ennobling kind, but it is a powerful restraining influence. And if the industrial situation were so transformed that the employer and employé changed places with regard to the control of this factor, it is easy to see that a most severe demand would be made on the public spirit and devotion of the worker. Human nature has a fortunate way of rising to the exigencies of a new situation ; and we need not conclude that this ideal is in any way remote. But it implies a very high degree of industrial patriotism.

On the main—that is, the ethical—issue it is clear that these proposals assert a principle the neglect of which was the great failure of the nineteenth century, and is still the source of nearly all our avoidable social misery. That principle is simply that industrial prosperity is not to be measured solely in terms of material wealth ; or, in other words, that industry must be regulated by reference to supra-economic ends. Its profit and loss account must show human as well as material values ; and that industry is neither prosperous nor healthy which shows a great output of material goods at the cost of a great deterioration of the health, the character and the human capacity of the worker. This principle of course, when we put it down in black and white, appears the baldest of truisms. But it is the sort of truism which the leaders of the industrial world contrive effectually to forget ; and how recent are our beginnings of the practical enforcing of it is proved by the tremendous struggle that always



ensues on every fresh extension of the Trades' Boards Act. It is neither unnatural nor wholly discreditable that it should be so. Industry had a long and severe fight to secure its freedom from all kinds of artificial restrictions and outworn limitations. And manufacturers are legitimately anxious that their present high standard of efficiency, which seems to them to be the result of the removal of these restrictions, should be maintained. They are inclined, therefore, to look rather narrowly at any suggestion of the encroachment into the domain of industry of considerations which will inevitably affect seriously the straightforward working of the industrial machine.<sup>1</sup> Nevertheless, the acceptance of the principle, and its application to economic life, is the chief corner-stone of all social health and progress.

But it is important to note that if the acceptance of this principle is fatal to the soulless dominion of the worst forms of capitalist control, it is equally fatal to the extreme Syndicalist view. The demand for a revision of industrial values leads to the demand for autonomous industries. And this, as we have seen, is sometimes taken to mean the abolition of all forms of political organization except the Parliament elected on an industrial franchise. A man's title to citizenship, and his sole mode of its expression, are through his membership of a trade guild. But this subtle transition destroys the whole moral basis of the reformist claim. It is merely to repeat the error of the

<sup>1</sup> It is one of the consequences of the unity of economic organization over the whole world that no one country can easily go very far in advance of other countries in the way of subordinating economic to ethical values. Such a subordination generally means a rise in the cost of production, which attracts competition from foreign industries, and may lead to the dislocation of industry in the ethically more advanced community. Of course the proper attitude in the face of this situation is to find methods of meeting it, and not to let things be as they are. The possibilities in this field which are opened out by the international organizations which are at present being advocated for political reasons, have scarcely yet attracted adequate attention.

existing order—the assumption of the primacy of industrial values. One may rightly demand that a man's work should be an instrument of citizenship : but it should not be the only instrument. It is right to desire that industry should be so organized that it may become a field of moral development : but that is not the same thing as to desire that the whole of human life should be based upon and arranged around the values realizable in industry.

Here, perhaps, we come in sight of the fundamental issue raised in various degrees by these different proposals. All of them are inclined to express their differences from orthodox Socialism as a difference in the regard that they have for the respective interests of producers and consumers in industry. State Socialism, though its strongest motive was to protect the worker from the pressure of unregulated competition, was nevertheless based on a belief in the priority of the consumer's interest : and the amazing success of its propaganda in the hands of such accomplished writers as Mr. and Mrs. Webb was primarily due to the promise which it held out that industry should become a more efficient servant of social needs and purposes. But here we are confronted with a claim, on the part of the Syndicalists at least, that the interest of the producer is all-important : and we must be clear as to the issue which this raises in the organization of social life.

No competent observer at this time of day is likely to dispute the gravity of the producer's interest in his industry, or to believe that the existing order makes adequate recognition of it. But have we any right to go farther and to maintain that his interest is supreme ? Or, to translate this question into more concrete terms, can we properly demand that the *sole* criterion of the organization of an industry shall be its return, in physical and spiritual well-being, to those engaged in it ? This principle involves one corollary which is decisive against it. All producers are more than producers. They are also, and inevitably, members of that wider society whose

enterprise is not only to provide material necessities but to make room for all the interests of human life. If therefore we regard industry as the concern only of the producers, we divorce the interests realizable in industry from their setting in the system of human life as a whole. And that, in effect, means that we regard industry and the values attainable therein, not only as supremely the concern of those engaged in it, but as their supreme concern. We isolate a part of life, and treat it as though it were the whole.

It is clear, therefore, and as we have pointed out, it is the implication of certain of the more consistent reformist programmes themselves, that the ethical values which we hope to win from industry must be sought in relation to all the values of social life, and every industry be regarded as an instrument of social purposes which are shared by others than those who carry it on. Any other interpretation is a misunderstanding of the just demand for the civilization of industry. That demand does not mean that his industry should become the producer's fundamental interest. It means that his industry should be, not something alien to the main endeavour of his life, but, in its own degree, an avenue of personal and social welfare. In other words, it requires the transition in a whole society, from the narrower point of view of economics to the wider point of view of living citizenship. And from this point of view, industry should be judged, not merely by the values directly realizable in it, but as a function of a citizenship which is in all its forms and activities a realization of values. An industry which produces material wealth at the cost of the destruction of human capacity stands condemned. But, on the other hand, we may be prepared and content to find that the main service to human development of at least some forms of industry under present conditions is less in the experiences which it itself offers than in the provision of the means and of the conditions of other forms of individual and social self-expression.



The point involved in this argument may appear to be purely academic. But it is more than that. For evidently our line of approach to the practical problem of industrial reconstruction will be determined by the theory which we adopt. If we accept the former contention—the right of the producer to first if not sole consideration in all matters that concern his industry—the ideal at which we should aim can be nothing but the restoration of small industries, and the destruction of the whole system of large-scale production. No other system of industry promises the attainment of so much human value, so much variety of activity and direct responsibility, as this. Under any large-scale system, Syndicalist or any other, there would still necessarily be minute subdivision of tasks, and much purely mechanical and routine work. It can hardly be questioned that the maximum of human value in industry can be achieved only in the small arts and crafts.

If, on the other hand, we accept the second point of view, we give ourselves the right to raise important preliminary questions before we adopt any special form of industrial organization. We view industry as *one* activity of citizenship, *one* way in which a man gains personality and moral development. Hence as an alternative to the organization of industry with no other aim than the attainment in it of the greatest sum of values, we may properly consider what organization promises the maximum of values throughout the whole social order.

In this case our practical aim might well be, not to revert to a small-scale and less productive industrial system, but, consistently with our central purpose of realizing human values, to raise production to such a level that the necessities of industry would lie more lightly on the whole community, and even those whose industrial lives were monotonous and uninspiring could have far greater leisure and ampler resources for the enjoyment of extra-industrial pursuits. This, of course, in no sense precludes the genuine effort to get far more ethical value

out of industry itself than we have ever got hitherto ; and so far from prejudicing the positive case for Guild Socialism or for any other scheme of reform, it is the principle on which, in the last resort, these systems are based.

As a matter of fact, it does not exclude the view that the true direction of progress is towards a system of small industries. It merely insists that the case for such a system, or for any other, must be argued, not simply from the standpoint of the producer, but from that of society as a whole, and that industry must not be considered apart from its place in the general pattern of social activities. It is perfectly open to any one to argue that from this concrete point of view—i.e. from the point of view of the health of *all* human and social activities—small industries are desirable. He does not prove his case simply by pointing out that such a system gives the individual more interesting and more personal work—though, by doing so, he adduces a very strong argument. He has to show that the gain in this direction outweighs the possible loss in others.

#### § 5. THE POSSIBILITIES OF LARGE-SCALE INDUSTRY.

It is evident from what has been said in the preceding section that in this country, at any rate, the predominant tendency is all in the direction of maintaining large-scale industry. Not, indeed, that the revival of the arts and crafts is of no importance. It will certainly affect some industries ; and even along with the increasing application of machinery to agriculture, it may well become a feature of rural life. But on the whole, under the influence, either consciously or unconsciously, of some such scheme of values as we have set forth, the reformist movement has chosen the way of great industries. It is therefore relevant to our present purpose to inquire in more detail what values have been, and may increasingly be, realized in such a system. These may be conveniently summarized under five heads.

1. While it is true, as we have seen, that in large-scale industry there is little room for the development of the varied skill of the old craftsman, yet, on the other hand, there are possibilities of more intensive skill. The minding of machinery often, though by no means always, calls for very high qualities of hand and brain; and it is probable that the demand for highly skilled work has increased even more rapidly than the demand for work of a relatively low grade. Large-scale production has not drawn a sharper line between skilled and unskilled workers, but it has specialized skill in certain directions, and therefore made the transition from one occupation to another more difficult to workers who did not begin their industrial lives with a sufficiently high level of general training. A large number of unskilled workers is symptomatic of the hostility of industry to the development of personality. But, on the other hand, we must not forget that the higher ranks enjoy opportunities at least as fine and possibly more widely spread than at any time in history.

2. Again, the vast stream of wealth which results from our industrial system is, and can increasingly be, the source of certain conditions which at least alleviate, and may in the end compensate for, much of the monotony that is characteristic of industry itself. First of all, it greatly expands the range of most men's experience. The world of books, of buildings, of pictures, of facilities for travel and for other forms of human enjoyment and education is immensely greater than it ever was, and available for a far larger mass of the population. Unfortunately, we must discount this very heavily by reason of the fact that the ability to use these resources has not increased so rapidly as the resources themselves: and the major part of the responsibility for this defect must be attributed to industry. It is because industry is so heart-breakingly monotonous that many are ready to seek relaxation in cheap and easy forms of excitement rather than in the effort to gain real satisfactions. Even so, it is still probably true that the average working-man has a wider range



of life than his father had. If he is neither a better nor a more accomplished man, he has at least the chance of being so. And if the education of the future accomplishes in any degree the great task that lies before it, the wealth of human enjoyment that will be opened, simply because of the great productiveness of industry, will be enormous.

3. Further, industry does and can permit a much more generous period of leisure for the employment of these resources. We have already noted that the wealth of a civilized community is now great enough to release a large proportion of its members from industrial work; and that proportion is steadily rising. And for those who are still actively engaged in industry, there is the reasonable assurance of much shorter hours of work. There is now annually produced in this country such a volume of goods and services that on a fairly equal distribution it would suffice to keep every family in comfort, if not in luxury.<sup>1</sup> If, then, we were content to call a halt at the standard of comfort which we have now reached, or are within measurable distance of reaching, possibilities of decreased working hours open up at once. What would happen would be an attempt to improve our methods of distribution, and at the same time to apply all mechanical inventions and improvements in production, not to increasing our wealth, but to diminishing the amount of work that the human factor has to do, and so providing him with greater leisure for the enjoyment of his wealth.<sup>2</sup>

It is important for us to remember in these days of urgent social movements that every reform in the conditions of life is costly. It means either that the better conditions

<sup>1</sup> Measured in money—a deceptive measure—the income of each household of five would be somewhere about £230 per annum in pre-war times (cf. Smart, *Distribution of Income*).

<sup>2</sup> It is in this connexion that the solution of the problem of restriction of output becomes at once urgent and possible. Justifiable in view of the conditions that lead to the exploitation of the worker, the doctrine under other conditions can only mean treason to the cause of progress and demoralization of the individual worker.

are accompanied by a lowering of our standard in some other way, or that somehow a compensating increase in production must take place. If we establish a Health Insurance Commission to look after the health of the workers, we withdraw a very large number of men and women from productive work, and assign another duty to them. To the extent to which they would have contributed to the total of the goods and services at the disposal of the community, the community is the poorer; and either every one's share is a little smaller, or else those who are engaged in production have to make good the loss. Or to take another instance, the raising of the school age involves a certain economic loss. To keep children at school for a year or two longer than at present means, not only the withdrawal from the community's resources of the considerable product of these children, during the years which are at present spent in industry, but also of the additional number of teachers and officers which this reform calls into being. It is true that this may prove to be a good investment later on. The extra years of school-training may so increase the capacity of the child that he becomes a far more productive worker than he would otherwise be. But at the moment the first effect is a diminution of production, and therefore of consumption. The transaction is essentially an investment of social capital. If I save now and invest in a productive enterprise what I might otherwise consume, I am submitting to a present diminution in life in the expectation of a future enlargement. But the one condition under which this is possible is that I should have a balance of income over absolutely necessary expenditure. If my income just meets what I must expend to keep myself in efficient life, it is of no use to offer me the most attractive investments. They may promise the most abundant future return; but if I have no balance to invest, the prospect of the future return will not enable me to take advantage of it. So with society. Unless its total income is more than sufficient to keep it at its existing level of efficiency,

it can make no advance in social conditions. It has no surplus with which to meet the cost of its reforms, even although these reforms promise to pay for themselves ten times over in the course of a few years.

The suggestion is this. We cannot improve our social conditions without spending something on the improvement. To get the capital, we have to consume less than we produce; so that we have either to diminish our standard of comfort, or, if we maintain it, to increase our production. As the former condition is notoriously difficult to secure (except under such overwhelming pressure as the burden of a great war), the normal method of finding our social capital will be to keep our consumption very much as it is,<sup>1</sup> and to maintain or increase our production, so as to have available a fund for investment in social betterment. This investment need not take the form of making new public services. One of its most obvious and urgent applications is just the reduction of hours of labour. Nor need the increasing of production mean harder work on the part of individuals. It can be far better accomplished by the increasing use of science and invention in industry, the more skilful use of the productive powers that Nature puts into the hands of man.<sup>2</sup> And the hopeful thing is

<sup>1</sup> This, of course, does not mean that we should maintain the existing rate of consumption among all classes. The poor might advantageously consume a great deal more and the rich a great deal less. This we should have to effect by an improvement in distribution. But the *total* consumption might remain much as at present.

<sup>2</sup> Reference might be made to the extraordinarily interesting results recorded by the committees which have recently been investigating the effects of fatigue and of hours of labour upon output. The general conclusion to which they point is that, quite apart from the vexed question of "scientific methods," the output over any length of time may be greatly increased by reduction of all forms of overtime and by the introduction of short periods of rest, especially for women, in the ordinary work-day (see the Reports of the Government Committees on the Health of Munition Workers, on Industrial Fatigue by physiological investigators; and of the Sub-committee on the Economic Aspects of Fatigue appointed by the Economic Section of the British Association).



that these reforms have a cumulative effect. A man who has begun to save can rapidly increase his rate of saving by saving the interest on his capital as well as his capital : and so can the community. Every improvement of social conditions in time makes further improvements possible. Thus, e.g., the raising of the school age, apart altogether from ethical considerations of which we shall speak later, would be a sound business proposition. It would certainly result in a greater adaptability and in an improvement of general technical skill. But evidently this whole scheme of social progress depends on our ability to maintain the large supply of goods and services which we require to meet the ordinary wants of the community ; and this, in turn, depends on the existence of large-scale industry, and the will to make the best possible use of it.

4. Again, industry contributes in some degree to the elimination of the hardships which it imposes. The heaviest and most monotonous tasks are precisely those which are most likely to be taken over by machinery. The fact that machinery can do these things better and more cheaply than man compels its ruthless introduction into industry, and involves unquestionably great hardships on the workers whom it displaces. But the process does not stop ; for man, in endurance and accuracy in routine tasks, is no match for a machine. On the long view, however, this is not wholly a regrettable thing. For it means that the sheer logic of industry is driving men out of the work which is least worthy of them, into duties where the machine cannot compete with them. Wherever work is purely mechanical, there man is in process of expropriation. But wherever work calls for initiative, for invention, for variable adjustment of means to ends, there man has the monopoly of labour power. And what is inevitably taking place is that a greater proportion of men have to find their industrial salvation in these essentially human tasks. Every rise in the standard of living of the working-classes inevitably hastens the process. Whenever labour stands for and obtains a higher rate of

wages, it offers an additional incentive to the employer to replace labour by machinery. Hence the ultimate effect of all mechanical improvements is really to compel man to abandon work which deadens him, and force him to train himself for work that is more worthy of human powers. One looks forward to the time when the severe competition that presently exists among unskilled workers, say at the docks, will be transferred to the higher industrial ranks, and to the professions.<sup>1</sup> Undoubtedly one of the main obstructions to progress here is the want of organization among the lower ranks, and particularly among women, in industry. So long as it pays the employer better to employ cheap labour than to improve his machinery and his methods, machinery and methods, and with them the position of the worker, will remain unimproved. This raises the question of the future of trade unionism, which lies beyond our scope. But what we have to note is that industry itself here supplies the stimulus to the creation of auxiliary institutions which will react on its character as a true organ of the general will. And this brings us to our last point.

5. Directly in connexion with industry, and forecasting the kind of development in which Guild Socialists put their hope for its future humanization, there has opened up a new range of experience to a great number of working men in their trade union world. The very risks to which competitive industry exposes men have compelled them to build up organizations of their own, in the form of unions and friendly societies, and in these they have a social experience of the most rich and varied kind. Quite apart from the fact that the administration of the unions gives to some men careers that require the very highest qualities of mind and will, the ordinary unionist wins a sense of social solidarity and public responsibility.

<sup>1</sup> On this topic, and on the whole subject of the prospects of large-scale industrial development, see Prof. Smart's *Second Thoughts of an Economist*, a notable work by a great economist on the ethical values of industry.

We can hardly over-estimate the value of trade unions as the experimenting ground of democratic institutions. In their constitution and working they have anticipated nearly all the methods that have been applied to the government of a democratic State;<sup>1</sup> and imperfect as the organization still is, the unions are still the most democratic of institutions. In the difficulties with which they find themselves faced in the matter of internal government, there is a precise analogy to the difficulties of a democratic State.<sup>2</sup> And the fact that all these problems arise in an institution which is based upon a strong sense of community of economic interest brings them forcibly home to the individual members, and makes them a powerful instrument of moral discipline.

#### § 6. CONCLUSION.

These, then, are the various values for personal and social life that can be realized in industry. And, to revert to our previous discussion, we may reasonably believe that it is no unwisdom to seek to heighten and enhance these values to the completest possible degree, and to look for the finer values and noblest experiences of life to other activities and institutions. Everywhere, it is clear, economic values must be subordinate to ethical; and it is more a matter for gratitude than for regret that the ethical failure of industry in the distribution of wealth and of responsibility has been, and is likely in the immediate future to be in an even greater degree, the source of profound unrest. Perhaps it will be argued that the policy of getting what we can out of industry, and looking—to put it crudely—for compensation elsewhere is really a surrender of principle. And if it is, it is a surrender that comes uncommonly badly from the professional classes,

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *Industrial Democracy*, S. and B. Webb, chap. i.

<sup>2</sup> For a brief statement of these cf. *The Round Table*, June 1916, p. 462. The whole article on "Industrial Policy after the War" is extremely illuminating, and relevant to our discussion.



who, if any one can, get the finest personal experiences out of their industry. "You believe," we may be told, "in treating every one as an end, and not as a means. And yet, as against an ideal which, at the cost of vastly reduced wealth for every one, gives every one a tolerable chance of interesting and elevating work, you set up an ideal of considerably greater wealth for every one, and of a very fine life for many, at the cost of condemning some to spend a certain part of their time in dull and monotonous toil. However small you hope to make your labouring class, and however short you hope to make their working day, however much you hope to improve their conditions of work and their capacity for other pursuits and enjoyments, is it not still true that they exist in order to give you, whose livelihood is not drudgery but life, a better and more human life than you would otherwise have?"

In principle we have already replied to this contention. It attempts to estimate a social system by striking a balance between the individual satisfactions possible therein, and ignores the element of partnership in a great social enterprise. No system whose end is real community of experience or attainment can be measured thus, and we need only apply the criterion to such an institution as the family to realize how impossibly narrow it is. But even if we do not avail ourselves of this appeal, and accept the atomist assumption of our critic, the answer is still plain enough. The criticism would require us to reject any industrial system which was inconsistent with the principle that no one might properly exercise any industrial function which rested upon and was made possible by the imposition of less elevating duties on others. In effect we should have to abandon the whole principle of division of labour, and return to a primitive economy. But if we did, would any single individual be the gainer? It is more than doubtful whether even the least fortunate in our present community would not lose by the change. There would be more equality, though still not a complete

measure of that. There would be no subordination, at least in principle. But equally there would be little co-operation, and little attempt to realize the best in the individual's life. Inequality of function may appear at first look to be contrary to the requirements of social justice. But that is only so if we think of justice apart from its embodiment in a social order. We are bound to accept the test imposed upon us—Kant's maxim—that we should regard humanity always as an end, never merely as a means. But if it is true—as it has been the whole thesis of this book to prove—that humanity is a social creation, and that the individual comes to himself in association with institutions which are instruments of the enlargement of his mind and will, then it is not incompatible with this principle that he may find his best life in the service of purposes which are more fully or more consciously embodied in institutions or in persons other than himself.

We believe, then, that in the institution of industry itself there is nothing hostile to the attainment of the higher values of human life. The hostility appears only when, under the influence of false ideals, whether of individual profit or national efficiency, we allow it to be controlled by purely economic forces. Our business therefore is resolutely and at every stage to control, by reference to ethical standards, both the organization of industry itself and the relation of industry to the wider life of the community. If we are earnest enough about that—and we need not imagine that the task is easy—we may hope to find in industry, not indeed the only way of life, but at any rate a way of realizing certain values which have a not ignoble place in the system of man's ideal.

## CHAPTER X

### EDUCATION

#### § 1. EDUCATION AS A NECESSITY OF SOCIAL LIFE.

MOST of our discussions of education assume its institutional status ; and yet we are apt sometimes to overlook the significance of that status. We concern ourselves with matters of machinery—areas, authorities, buildings, and curricula—all the equipment of a highly organized institution. But we seldom ask the central question which should govern our discussion of all these important but secondary problems: What is the purpose which Society intends, or ought to intend, to achieve in this institution; and what is its relation to other ends of communal life? After all, we cannot properly devise the instruments until we know the functions which we mean them to fulfil. Evidently the provision which we shall make for education depends wholly on the importance which we assign to the educational purpose in the general scheme of social concerns. So that, while our survey of the make-up of Society and of the mind and will expressed therein does not engage us in matters of educational establishment or of method, we must raise the prior question of the place of the educational institution in the equipment of the community, and of its part in the consolidation and enlargement of social and personal will.

The classification of institutions which we have adopted is not rigid. Institutions which may primarily be viewed as existing for the sake of the maintenance and continuance



of life reveal themselves as contributing to its dignity and enhancements. The institution of education is pre-eminently an example of this kind of transition. It is, initially, a simple necessity of life ; it becomes an end of life itself. If we understand the spring of this extension of purpose, we may understand what the significance of education is and what it may become.

First, then, education is a necessity of life, in the sense that some kind of education is a condition of the maintenance of the barest physical subsistence. Man's survival is due, not to his bodily prowess, but to his unique capacity for learning by experience. His higher quality of intelligence first enabled him to outwit the assaulting forces of Nature and the stronger animals, and finally gave him a definite mastery over them. Progress was possible in the dim eras of prehistoric time because one generation could instruct another in the lore it had won through struggle and suffering. Each decisive gain could be recorded and secured because men were able to teach and to learn. And this is not less true now, when the requirements even of physical life have grown far beyond mere subsistence. Civilization depends, on its material side, on an increasing application of man's intelligence to the task of finding provision for his needs. His numbers increase ; his demands increase far more rapidly still. And Nature's provision is not inexhaustible, unless man constantly seeks out the hidden sources of supply, and discovers more economical methods of using them. The conservation of our present level of life, and still more the elevation of it which is possible and desirable, require from us nothing so much as a more arduous and sustained preparation for the work of understanding and employing the powers of Nature and of man. Not only must we find new and finer methods of scientific research : we must find more enlightened and humane ways of using the fruits of our discovery. If the main motive or result of our investigation is the production of more terrible engines of destruction, we are as certainly working the downfall

of civilization as if we wholly neglected the cultivation of the mind on which it depends. Education in natural science alone will not save the world, though the world will not be saved without it. It must be preceded and surrounded by education in the things of the mind, a searching out of those riches which neither corrupt nor divide men, and to the service of which they may devote the resources bestowed upon them by the labours of science.

And not merely are the provision and use of the material necessities of life dependent on education, but equally so are those immaterial conditions without which no civilized life can be maintained. Civilization and common progress in the arts of life are possible only in communities which are both ordered and free; and no community can have that quality unless there is a widespread appreciation of the ends and methods of government and social life. We cannot work with the small scale of freedom that marked the culture cities of ancient and mediæval Europe. For good or evil, we are irrevocably committed to a freedom which is, in principle, universal; and such a freedom is far more difficult to maintain than the old. It is still, as we shall see, insecure: and the only warrant of its security is that men should learn the ends for which their freedom should be used. We can put the matter in the simplest way if we think, not of the ends for which freedom exists, but merely of the instrument of freedom. That instrument is government; and democratic government at least demands an educated people. For government of any sort requires authority; and authority attaches to a decision or decree only when it has some definite authentic will behind it. Plainly it is easier to secure singleness of aim and action with few rulers than with many. Hence a democratic community is sometimes apt to be hesitating in counsel or a prey to the danger of inner dissension. Its safety in such a condition lies only in an educated community. Men may be reluctant to be persuaded of a truth; but it is the only thing of which, in the long run, they will be persuaded, or on which

they will agree. Unanimity, therefore—or that measure of harmony of mind and will which makes possible effective common action—depends upon the wide diffusion of a sense of truth and of the candour which will abide by the truth. It is a product of education, and of nothing else. Democracy will stand or fall, will become more of a living reality or more of a formal sham, by its success or failure in the training of educated citizens.

## § 2. EDUCATION AS AN END IN SOCIETY.

Both on the material and moral sides, then, education is a plain enough necessity. But if it is true that even industry is often, and increasingly may become, more than a simple means to life, but a vehicle of the good life, it is far more true of education. Education is the citizen's passport to a useful share in the work of the community, and to an intelligent part in its direction ; but it is equally his passport to those extra-political activities which are the crown of free citizen life. The enjoyment of all the finer creations of the human spirit is the prerogative of the educated mind. No other can enter the kingdom of art or of literature ; to no other do the worlds of morality and religion reveal their full splendour. It is true that none of these things, least of all morality and religion, are merely matters of education : but education is a condition of the attainment of the best in them. Hence as these things are the true ends of life, education—the gateway to all of them—is in some degree the supreme condition of man's achievement of a life worthy of his powers. Without it, he must live on the lower plains, unmoved by the vision of the heights which are set for his ascending. His life, no doubt, would be a simpler thing, stirred by fewer of the impulses and ardours which are the source of his discontent. But the peace would be bought at the cost of ignorance of his own being and the surrender of all that sets him high in the scale of created things.



From this point of view, education is not simply one among many enterprises of man, but a main condition of all the others; and its provision, to that extent, a supreme concern of his common effort. Through it, man gains, not only subsistence in the world and a stable freedom in his association with others, but that harder thing, possession of himself. The end of citizenship, and of all the institutions which it creates, is the development of individuality. And if, as we have said, education is a first condition of the understanding of those ideals and achievements by devotion to which personality is won, its endowment must be a first and abiding care of citizenship. Or we may put the same point from another angle. Real community is community of free persons: so that any community which claims the character of freedom must offer to all its members the condition of freedom and personality. Associations of men and women who have not yet entered into full possession of themselves are, of course, the normal forms of political grouping to-day; but they are not the associations which man can and will achieve, or in which he can most fully realize the values for which he cares. The bond of these associations is far from being mere force. They are chosen and willed so far as the purposes embodied in them are consciously present to the minds of their members; and they call forth fine loyalty and service in so far as the ends they represent are ends which their citizens have learned to impose on themselves in that stage of freedom which they have attained. But the freedom is nowhere yet complete; nor the life of these communities that uncompelled but unyielding loyalty of men who understand the high aims of their mutual service. No community which hopes for life may cease to set before itself such an ideal as this. For the ties of uncritical custom and convention on which, in part, it relies now, it must seek to substitute a conscious willing of common purposes, and the disciplined habit which is the outcome of such will. And for this approach to fullness of being its instrument is education. One test,

perhaps the test, of a community's faith in its own development to a higher and freer life is the place which it assigns in the order of its purposes to the education of its members.

### § 3. THE STATE AND EDUCATION.

The State, through its organization of central and local government, we may assume to be the instrument through which Society makes effective certain of its broadest and most general purposes. These considerations which we have set forth lead us easily to a definition of the attitude of the State to education. Evidently in a matter so vital to the very existence of Society, and no less vital to its spiritual health, the State must lay upon itself the duty of providing the means for an adequate establishment. It must ensure that every one of its future citizens has the opportunity of acquiring at least that degree of education which will make him, not only capable of useful membership of the community, but aware of his own possibilities as a spiritual being. And it must see that no child is deprived of this opportunity through parental poverty or lack of foresight. In other words, it must provide a free and compulsory system of education which will bring the young citizen to the point at which he is capable of making an intelligent decision as to the way of life he will pursue.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> It is not necessary for our purpose here to discuss the point at which this capacity for intelligent choice may be said to be attained. It seems to be agreed that we cannot place it earlier than at sixteen years of age. The point that ought to be made clear is that compulsory education cannot safely stop before this point. If we choose to argue the matter on the lowest ground of expediency, the case is perfectly simple and clear. By far the most imperative need of the community is that its members should be used to the fullest possible extent *in the work for which they are fitted*. It is impossible for a boy to tell with any certainty what his "bent" is until he has some idea of the many ways of life that are open to him, and the demands and satisfactions of each. It is, therefore, to the advantage of the community to keep its human

This, in principle, is the admitted case for compulsory elementary education; and the two corollaries which most directly follow from it are widely enough recognized to be the motives of the advances which are in rapid progress. These corollaries are first that education of this general type should be far more prolonged than at present. And in the second place, this education must be neither a purely intellectual discipline nor, on the other hand, vocational or technical in character. Its aim must be to make a child at home in the worlds of Nature and of man, to train his will and feeling as well as his intelligence, to give him some appreciation of the values of life, and to train him in the endurance that is necessary for their pursuit.

For this end there is nothing gravely wrong with the

resources as mobile as possible—i.e. not prematurely to specialize them, as is done when we take a boy from school at twelve or thirteen and allow him to enter whatever occupation chance or necessity may dictate. Evidently the only way to raise the quality of the higher public services is to keep the area of recruitment large enough to assure real competition for entrance to these services; and this, of course, involves a far higher level of general education before the decision to enter one or other trade or profession has to be taken.

This education up to the age of sixteen or so is called in the sequel "elementary," or "general," or "preliminary" education. It is not meant to imply that the education throughout the whole period should be of the type which we now call "elementary"—i.e. up to the age of twelve. It must include work (and schools) which we name "secondary," or "intermediate," or "higher grade." What is meant is that the aim should be to give to *all* children a general or cultural education. The same main purpose should be kept in view for all: the development of their capacity for an intelligent and varied contact with the world. There is no suggestion that this education should exclude pursuits like manual training of various kinds which will be useful to a boy later on when he goes to his trade. Such pursuits can be real instruments of culture, and a training in the creation and appreciation of delicate and beautiful workmanship. The point is that they should be taught because of their cultural value, and with that aim in view, not simply because they will be useful later.



main tradition of English education, whatever improvements in detail may be forthcoming. Since our aim should be the generous cultivation of the human spirit, our instruments must always be the basic subjects of humane study. Acquaintance with the world in which man lives, with the intellectual methods which have given him dominion over it, and with his achievements in civilization, literature, and art—that is the scheme of all liberal study. These are enough. And however the teacher may choose to instruct in these things, his purpose must always be to give his pupils a fresh and living contact with them, and to train him to appreciate them for himself. It would hardly be worth while insisting on this principle were it not that the issue is constantly in danger of being obscured by those who wish to direct education to some special end. The schools of the country are frequently admonished that they fail in their duty if they do not produce capable commercial men, or experts in foreign languages, or scientists, or engineers. And it is quite true that if the schools failed to produce students who were capable of entering these and other professions, they would fail in their duty. But there is a real *suggestio falsi* in the criticism. For its implication is that the business of the school is to export, as nearly as possible, the finished article in all these activities, to equip its boys and girls to step at once into some position in the industrial and commercial world. That implication—so far as it affects this preliminary stage of education—is thoroughly mischievous. The business of the school is simpler, and far more difficult. It is to develop human personality. If it does this, all these other interests will be well served—far better served than if they became, at too early a point, objects of special consideration and endeavour.

Beyond this stage the problem is somewhat more complex. For a certain duality of aim necessarily appears, which is properly reflected in differences of studies and of institutions in which these studies are carried on. It is

a perfectly healthy thing that once a pupil has chosen, with some understanding of what it means, the occupation which he intends to follow, his studies should bear some reference to it. Non-vocational education is not yet, and never should be, a thing of the past. For many pupils—those who propose to enter the higher professions—a great part of their professional training will consist simply in the severer study of humane subjects. And in the later education of all students, however specialized their technical studies may be, there should be some place for the humanities.<sup>1</sup> Life is always more than occupation. And if within the economic world we cannot without disaster make industry a law for itself, still less can we do so within the educational world. The real problem, which educational reformers have hardly yet faced on a great scale, is to adjust the claims of vocational and non-vocational education. Neither, in fact, is ever finished; and both tend to become more and more absorbing. The problem would be insoluble were it not that when non-vocational education reaches its best in the skilled technician's eager but disciplined pursuit of excellence in his occupation, whether it be boot-making or farming or surgery, the distinction between non-vocational and vocational disappears.

Evidently the problem which we have outlined demands the careful and constructive organization of a system of higher education. We shall have to provide many varieties of vocational training corresponding to the main kinds of human occupations, each of them based upon and reaching out towards an education and experience in the permanent interests of human life. We are much farther from a satisfactory handling of this problem than in the case of elementary education, and for a perfectly good reason. No satisfactory solution can be found

<sup>1</sup> Of course, here and throughout, the "humanities" means, not only Latin and Greek, but any subject of liberal education. The language and literature of any country, the arts of every kind, history, and pure science are all "humanities."

until the elementary problem is adequately treated ; and reformers have been rightly guided in their concentration mainly on that. At the same time, the outlines of a scheme of adolescent and adult education are even now in sight, and so far as one can judge they have been firmly and truly drawn. The history of the provision for adult education and the correlation of the various institutions charged with it would be an admirable example of the formation and clarifying of social purpose. The attempt to meet one urgent need has constantly brought new needs into prominence ; and yet every new need has been but another expression of the fundamental desire which was formulated in the old. Hence alongside the increase of the numbers and varieties of educational institutions, there has been a growing perception of the unity of the whole educational problem, and a corresponding co-operation and linking up between these establishments. Here, of course, we can give nothing more than an example of what is possible and what has, in fact, been partly accomplished.

There is one main difference between the work of a student at a college or university and the work of a pupil at school. The former is thrown back much more on his own responsibility and his own initiative,<sup>1</sup> he has more choice in the selection of his studies, and the motive to diligence in their pursuit is of a different kind. He spends less time with his instructors, and more time with his books or in the laboratory. That difference of treatment rests on a real psychical difference between a youth of eighteen or nineteen and a boy of thirteen or fourteen. And evidently when to the difference in age there has been added a wider experience of life than falls to the lot of the average undergraduate, an even greater difference in treatment is necessary. One's scheme of

<sup>1</sup> It may be quite a sound criticism of schools in general (and for that matter of some universities or university teachers) that they rely too little on the initiative of their pupils. But that need not obscure the fact that the difference between the two institutions in this respect is, and ought to be, considerable.



adult education, therefore, must combine two qualities—a freedom of choice in the subjects of instruction and a spontaneity in the manner of treatment, and at the same time the attainment of the best possible level of work. The practical conclusion is obvious. Adult education must become the concern of the Universities of the country. Or in other words, every adult who so desires should have the opportunity of becoming a University student.

The proposition, of course, is almost alarmingly big. But that is chiefly because we are apt to assume the perpetuity of our traditional indifference to education. If we intend that a man's education shall require from him only the remnants of his energy after a long day's work is done, it is quite true that our proposal is at once merely visionary. There is hardly time for him to acquire the barest rudiments of professional instruction, and none at all for the realization of that wider life of which vocation may be one expression. But there is no ground for the assumption of the continuance of the general situation which may be supposed to furnish at least part of the cause of our tradition. It is probable, as we have seen, that within a short span of years we shall be able to afford a substantial reduction in the hours of labour of all who are engaged in the main industrial services of the community. And in that event it rests with ourselves to determine whether or not an educational indifference will survive. We clearly should not contemplate the extension of the compulsory protection which we accord to elementary education to the education of adults. The freedom which must be the characteristic of that education should govern the choice of that pursuit itself. But we should set ourselves first to providing the means of an education that is worth choosing, and secondly to stimulating among all adult workers the perception of the value of education to their own lives. If once men and women recognize education as worthy of some of the service of their leisure they will not be slow to impose on themselves the duty

of devoting to it as generous a proportion of their time and their energy as the State compels them to devote to elementary and continuation schools.

And, as we have said, a beginning has been made. Partly by an enlargement of the official organization of education, through University Extension and other classes, and far more strikingly by the spontaneous growth of educational movements among adult workers—co-operative educational societies, adult schools, working-men's clubs, the Workers' Educational Association, and the like, an immense amount of non-vocational educational work has been accomplished; and the possibility of a University education for every worker who wants it has been brought within range of practical attainment. In 1912, e.g., four years after the foundation of the society, nearly 3,000 students were enrolled in the tutorial classes of the Workers' Educational Association.<sup>1</sup> It is not a great number, when one thinks of what it might be: but it is a considerable accession to the number of those who have tried to take advantage of the most advanced educational resources of the country. And what in effect has happened is that these men and women, of all ages, but mostly young, who have left school fairly early in life, and have spent much time either at the bench or in the technical school learning their respective trades, have turned again to educating themselves, and have established University classes in their own cities,

<sup>1</sup> The W.E.A. is perhaps the most striking of working-class educational organizations. Students for the most part undertake a course of work extending over at least three years, under the guidance of a tutor of University rank. The course is most exacting, as may be judged from the following extract from the report of the Master of Balliol on some of these classes: "Twenty-five per cent. of the essays examined by him after second year's work in two classes, and first year's work in six classes, were equal to the work done by students who gained first classes in the Final Schools of Modern History. He was astonished not so much at the quality as at the quantity of the quality of the work done."

—*University Tutorial Classes*, A. Mansbridge, p. 178.

towns, and villages.<sup>1</sup> What is perfectly possible, if we are willing enough to make the effort, is that through the Workers' Educational Association, or through any other of the organizations we have mentioned, there should be a University centre in every town in the country, to which a boy or girl leaving the continuation school or during or after attendance at a technical school, should normally and naturally repair for the continuance of his non-vocational education.

One does not wish in all this discussion to erect into an absolute cleavage the distinction between vocational and non-vocational education. No education is, or at least ought to be, wholly in one category and not in the other. A man is likely to be a more resourceful engineer or accountant if his mind has been trained in other studies than those that bear directly on his profession. And on the other hand, if a training in engineering drawing cannot be expected to cultivate a man's appreciation of English Literature, it should at least give him some idea of the beauty of line and curve, just as a course in building construction should leave some impression of architectural form and comeliness. Again, any tolerably adequate vocational training must include some consideration of the place of the vocation in the make-up of social and industrial life, and therefore at least the beginning of a treatment of social values. Nevertheless there is a distinction between the two kinds of education; and that distinction will certainly continue to affect the organization of educational institutions. We are at present very much occupied in overhauling our arrangements for technical instruction: and it is vastly important that we should do so. But it is just as important for national and individual health and welfare that we should remember that vocation is not the whole of life; and that if our

<sup>1</sup> Excluding London, there were in 1912 University classes established in nearly seventy towns and villages from thirteen University seats.



material wealth is to be an instrument of spiritual life and not of spiritual death, we must provide for the education of our citizens in all the activities wherein man has sought the deepest expression of his creative spirit.

It is not our province here to discuss in greater detail the appropriate methods for the realization of this ideal. Our aim has been merely to show how the educational purpose is coming more clearly into the centre of our social consciousness, and how it has embodied itself in institutions capable of the extension which will be necessary when we fully recognize what education means to the quality of our common will and enterprise. And we need not do more now than define briefly the attitude which the State ought to assume towards this developing organization of adolescent and adult education. In the main, we believe, our tradition, so far as it has gone, is sound.

This later education is partly vocational in intention: and that has sometimes been assumed to be a reason why public authorities should not be expected to bear a great part of the cost of it. It is agreed that since a measurable benefit is conferred directly on the student, and on the occupation with which he is associated, the main incidence of the cost should fall on him or on the corporation of his profession. The legal profession, let us say, in virtue of its status and privileges in the community, must assume the responsibility for securing and training an annual recruitment to its numbers adequate to maintain the efficiency of the service which it renders. So that, e.g. a Faculty of Law in a University should be financed largely by the various incorporations of the legal profession. Similarly with other occupations.

Now it is clearly all to the good that there should be a widespread individual and corporate recognition of the importance of purposes of this kind. On the other hand, it is certain that this extreme simplification of the problem does not do justice to the interest of the State, as such, in these concerns. In the first place, the whole benefit even of purely technical instruction is not confined solely

to the individual and his profession. Every trained workman is an asset to the whole community, not only economically through his greater productivity and therefore greater demand on the services of others, but through his capacity for a more intelligent participation in the general social activities. And again, the State is itself by far the largest employer of professional skill, and, with the greater nationalization of industry, will become so to an increasing degree. Finally no industry or profession is exclusively the affair of its members. We saw previously<sup>1</sup> how the advocates of a greater autonomy in industry had recognized that a perfectly rigid organization of industry by great Trade Unions would break down because of its failure to adjust itself to the general situation and requirements of the community. Equally disastrous would be exclusiveness in control of the recruitment and education of the professions. The community has already suffered from its complaisance in allowing certain professions to impose a financial qualification on prospective entrants: and it would be a mistake to destroy that barrier and permit the erection of another. So long as the State assumes a certain measure of responsibility for the support of vocational training, it can properly take measures to safeguard itself against professional monopoly, and encourage the flow into the various occupations of ability which might otherwise have been excluded.

There are very good reasons, then, why the State should continue to impose on itself the duty of providing a generous measure of support for vocational training, whatever help may be available from other sources. It is indeed a duty corresponding to the duty of a general supervision of all such education, which the State may not properly abrogate. The case is even clearer with regard to non-vocational education. If we attempt to assess benefits received, it is evident that the profession gains as well as the individual and the community. But in so far as this kind of education is a condition of the attainment of all the higher

<sup>1</sup> See pp. 192-4.

ends of common life, it is peculiarly the concern of the most authoritative organization of that life. While therefore we may hope that all kinds of associations will increasingly recognize the importance of this education, we may fairly throw on the State the onus of securing completely adequate provision for it. It is certain that no activity of the State will yield a greater increment in its spiritual dignity and health than the encouragement and satisfaction of the desire of its citizens to possess and to enhance the finest fruits of the mind of man.

#### § 4. EDUCATION FOR CITIZENSHIP.

We have spoken before<sup>1</sup> of the essential danger of entrusting to the State the care of such an interest as education. It is that the State may easily be tempted to direct education to some end of its own—the maintenance of the existing social order or devotion to its own special and exclusive good. It may cast the young minds in its charge into a narrow and uncritical patriotism, and rob them of their proper concern for the general welfare of mankind.

The danger is perfectly real, in our own country as elsewhere. And wherever it materializes, there is the death both of enlightened citizenship and of education. Nothing could be more subtly destructive of the integrity of individual and social life than the attempt to educate primarily in the interests either of nation or of class. But now that we are face to face with this danger, it is well to realize that it is not peculiar to any special system of educational control. For every enterprise of man is so much part of the social order from which it springs that serious education at any hands, or in any human interest, is coloured by the envioning life of Society and State. We cannot divorce any one of man's concerns from its concrete social setting without violating the indwelling unity of all spiritual endeavour. All education, therefore,

<sup>1</sup> See p. 25.



must have some reference to the world in which are developed those interests for which it is at once preparation and fulfilment : and that world will not be denied merely because education is not within the compass of its political organization. Even if we were willing to take from the State the responsibility of caring for this spiritual service, we should not thereby purchase immunity from its influence. It is reasonably certain, on the contrary, that one way to ensure that that influence will be such as we least desire, is thus to deprive the State of the best opportunity it can have of witnessing to, and of enlarging its concern for, the future and finer community of citizens.

That, indeed, is the decisive reason why, apart from all questions of practical expediency, we should regard education as a main concern of the State's. Education, of all institutions, is the most responsive to the character of the life which surrounds it, and equally it is its most powerful determinant. If, therefore, as we shall see, the State is the embodiment of a conception of life, and of an order of values realizable therein, anything which profoundly touches that quality, and especially anything which affects the worth of the inheritance which the present holds in trust for the future, is properly its concern. We have seen how the State has increasingly "interfered" in other institutions, such as the family and industry, not in order itself to discharge their functions but to prepare the conditions under which they can give their best service. So it should be with education. It is the right and the duty of the State to secure for the high enterprise of education the conditions under which it can most amply fulfil its part.

And for the rest, the safety of education against corruption by passion and ignorance is to be sought in the realm in which these things are found—in the realm of ideas. Education, like every other institution, will be healthy only if those who are concerned with it understand and strive for its own proper end. That end is primarily the winning and enriching of human personality. And

since personality is a social fact, no society need fear for its own interests so long as education is inspired by that ideal. We go wrong, and we imperil the vigour and sanity of our whole enterprise if we seek first any less comprehensive or less arduous end, even the end of social solidarity.<sup>1</sup> So long as men are trained to know the truth and the good, everything that matters in the life of the State, everything which ought to count on the devotion of citizens will win the service which it needs. A mind which is alight with a genuine appreciation of the world and of man will not fail to find the place at which it can most fruitfully assume the duty of maintaining the social fabric. It will know society and its organic institutions as the condition of all for which it cares ; and its loyalty will be unconstrained and profound. Hence the true wisdom of the State is to provide the circumstances which education requires and to let it give, most freely, all that it has to give. Here, as everywhere in social practice, the sovereign rule is that superb test of faith : " Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you."

It is hardly necessary to say that there is in this view nothing hostile to the most serious education in those studies which touch closely on citizen life and duty.<sup>2</sup> The human sciences, as they are called, are a profoundly important part of all education ; and no one can be at home in the world without understanding something of the principles and ideals of social construction. No single educational reform promises greater immediate gain than the spread of a real concern for these things throughout

<sup>1</sup> Professor Burnet's *Higher Education and the War* gives a very striking account of the warping of a whole educational system by its direction to the training of a competent higher Civil Service. That, of course, is an important and legitimate purpose of every State. What is wrong, and indeed disastrous, is to make it the first and most important aim of education.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. " The Education of the Citizen " in the *Round Table* for June 1917.

our whole society. And for some men and women—those called to the high vocation of directing and administering the public will—the prolonged study of these facts and forces is the basis of all intelligent service. But even here the motive must always be not primarily to produce a special form of social will, but to enlarge understanding and sympathy, and to promote a freer, more candid, and more continuous commerce between the individual and his world. The strengthening and purifying of social purpose is an assured result. But it is assured best when it comes as the response of the individual mind to the appeal of a wider and deeper knowledge of the high adventure of man's social life.



## CHAPTER XI

### THE STATE

#### § 1. THE PLACE OF THE STATE IN MODERN THEORY.

IN the theory of the State, we approach the crux of all political discussion. The State we may define in a rough preliminary way, as the institution, or system of institutions, which, in order to secure certain elementary common purposes and conditions of life, unites under a single authority the inhabitants of a clearly marked territorial area. It is the largest and the most powerfully equipped institution within Society: indeed it is often conceived as the organization through which Society as a whole exercises its most compelling influence over its individual members and becomes a Society in the full sense. Hence the social theorist is apt to think of his problem as chiefly concerning the nature and limits of the authority exercised by the State; what provinces of life it may claim to overlook, what it had best leave alone; what right it may be presumed to have against the individual, and what the individual against it.

We have admitted by our previous discussion that this is not the whole problem of social theory, though it is still a very important, even fundamental one.<sup>1</sup> The habit

<sup>1</sup> In the strict use of the terms, it is, of course, the essential problem of *political* theory, i.e. the theory of the political organization of Society. Social theory, i.e. the theory of all forms and activities of man's common life, must survey many other institutions, and raise many other problems. But the words "social" and "political" are not always used in their precise and distinguishable meanings.

of regarding it as the sole problem is really the outcome of the study of Greek political theory. For in fifth-century Athens, the State was the living and palpable centre of all human interest, and every social activity was a form of political life. Hence Greek thinkers, in their review of the State, could ascribe to it a great variety of positive functions, and find in it the natural medium for all man's higher pursuits and enjoyments. The political theory of Plato and Aristotle, therefore, is a survey of all the modes of attaining a worthy human life, all of them radiating from the central conception of the service of the city-State. The finished and perfect form which they were able to give to their theory of the State has profoundly affected all speculation—partly for good and partly for detriment—for good because they defined once and for all the essential and vital character of all political life; and for detriment because it has been difficult to secure proper consideration for the great diversity of non-political institutions which have grown up to modify the whole scheme and structure of Society. For this reason, it has happened that political theory has roughly divided itself into two schools—that which, starting more or less from the point of view of the Greeks, thinks primarily in terms of the State, and attempts to make of it the synthesis of all institutions; and that which, by way of reaction from the first, thinks primarily of other institutions, and regards the State mainly as a contrivance for providing individuals and societies with certain external conditions within which they may best fulfil their function in the development of individual and social character.<sup>1</sup> Perhaps the most conclusive examples of the first school are to be found in the writings of German political thinkers, culminating in the now notorious Treitschke. It has, naturally enough, gone out of fashion in England; though

<sup>1</sup> The contrast of these two schools is admirably presented in Professor Sorley's lecture on "The State and Morality" in the Bedford College Lectures on "The International Crisis; The Theory of the State."

in truth it never was fashionable here. The characteristic philosophy of England, since the time of Hobbes, has always tended in the other direction. There are, of course, great differences between various members of this second school as to the part which the State is permitted to play in the organization of life. Some writers, while regarding the State as charged chiefly, or even essentially, with the oversight of the conditions within which moral life must develop, would assign to it many functions which bring it intimately into contact with the individual, or with other institutions. Others, again, limit its sphere of operations very carefully and precisely, and are jealous of its intrusion into any new region; and there are some who regard the State merely as a survival from antiquity, with no real function in the modern world which is so rapidly forging new bonds of association undreamed of in the old. They see for the State nothing but a progressive paralysis that ends in death; and only the most charitable of them wish that its decease may be an euthanasia.<sup>1</sup>

Both of these views, especially in their extreme forms, appear, in varying degrees, to be wrong. The State is not an omnipotent synthesis of all institutions, or the final organization of humanity. Some institutions, like the Church, are incapable of being confined within the

<sup>1</sup> It is hazardous to select particular writers as examples of general tendencies; for each is apt to modify his central doctrine with special limitations and qualifications. But of the first of these three subdivisions, in what we have roughly called the characteristic English theory, perhaps J. S. Mill is the best representative. Even T. H. Green could be brought under this heading. The second comprises the whole group of Liberals of the Manchester school, from Bright to Lord Morley. Of the third something has already been said in connection with recent industrial movements. Its modern progenitor is Bakounin; there are traces of it even in his great rivals Marx and Engels. Sorel, the philosophic French Syndicalist, stands for it decisively; and, with considerable modifications, it is the theory implicit in the writings of Mr. Norman Angell. (On this last, cf. Mr. A. D. Lindsay's article in the *Political Quarterly*, December 1914.)



frontiers of a single State ; nor can the State ever claim to supply from its own resources the rich variety of interests that are embodied in the institutions which are the stuff and substance of human life. It is, therefore, neither the whole of Society, nor, necessarily, the institution which is always most representative of it. It can never claim that the individual owes his final loyalty to it ; or that in its service he should be prepared to sacrifice without question the duties that he owes to other institutions. When a conflict arises between the claims of the State and those of other associations, the State may not assume, as a matter of right, its own priority. Its claims must be tested by the same criterion as that which is applied to every other institution—the depth and seriousness of the purpose for which it exists, and its relevance to the progress of that whole Society which expresses all the ends and ideals of human life, and to which alone, therefore, the individual owes his highest obligation.

On the other hand, because we must begin by regarding the State as one institution among others in the general system of Society, like others constituted and sustained by the will of its members, it does not in the least follow that it is unimportant, or even that it is not more important than others. We have no right to rule out that possibility, any more than to assume the opposite. It may be that the obligation which the State imposes is often prior to that which we owe to other institutions, simply because on any particular issue the State may embody a purpose which is more vital to the progress of Society than any other. We can arrive at an understanding of the nature of the State, and of its place in the structure of Society, and therefore in the economy of our lives, only by asking what purpose, if any, it can be said to objectify. On the answer to this question our whole theory of political obligation will depend.

## § 2. THE PURPOSE OBJECTIFIED IN THE STATE.

We have already anticipated in Part I of these lectures, the principle of our answer to this question. We have now to apply it in detail to the specific problems arising out of the relations of the State to institutions that fall within its boundaries, to those that transcend its boundaries, and to those—such as other States—which fall wholly outside them. These relations certainly complicate our problem, but this need not involve the conclusion that the functions of the State in relation to these three kinds of institutions are different. The same essential function may very well express itself in different attitudes to different institutions. We may, therefore, conveniently consider first of all the internal relations of the State; and if, from this point of view, we arrive at any precise conception of its nature, we can ask how this would express itself in, or be modified by, its external relations.

What, then, in terms of the principle already expounded, is the function of the State in relation to its own members? What purpose does it embody? On what does its claim to loyalty ultimately rest? It is by no means easy to answer; for the reason that the State now discharges such a multiplicity of functions, and that these vary so much from one State to another. It seems to be largely a matter of historical accident what functions are discharged by any particular State at any period of its history. But in a general way, we may say of every modern State that it legislates and administers; it provides many of the necessary conditions of civilized life by maintaining courts of justice, by securing the safety of its citizens at home and abroad, and by organizing great services such as those essential to public health. It also enters the industrial field, owning and managing railways and coal-mines, munitions factories and shipbuilding yards, or conducting transport and communication services, in enterprises like the Post Office. It supervises and endows education and sometimes religion, and by means of various galleries,

theatres, libraries, or similar institutions, makes a modest provision for art and literature. In all these ways, it touches the life of the individual on every side. There is hardly any province which it may not invade; and it appears to be impossible to fix any theoretical or practical limits to its action. Necessity, expediency, or convenience seem always to urge its extension; and all that we can say with any certainty is that its range will increase rather than diminish.

It is, perhaps, partly the difficulty of selecting the essential from the accidental, of determining which of all these is *the* characteristic act of the State, and therefore what purpose it fundamentally embodies, that has led some thinkers either to deny that it has any clear purpose at all, or to assert that its purpose is merely an economic one—the provision of the conditions of life, which makes no real contribution to the higher ends of life.<sup>1</sup> Up to this point in our survey of institutions we have been able to assign an intelligible place to each of them, based on a definite purpose, holding a well-understood place in the system of life. The difficulty here is to apply the same method to the determination of the nature of the State.

Perhaps we may start from the consideration that historically the main function of the State in relation to its own citizens seems always to have been the organization of Justice.<sup>2</sup> In a larger sense, which will appear presently, this may be taken still as an adequate account of the purpose of the State. Meantime, it is sufficient to remark that if we look at the course of social development we can see underneath the varying forms of State-activity, the implicit recognition of this as its primary and fundamental function. Even at the time when the idea of the State had comparatively little power over the European

<sup>1</sup> See, e.g. B. Russell's *Principles of Social Reconstruction*, where this view has received recent statement.

<sup>2</sup> We exclude, for the moment, the function of leadership in war, which belongs rather to its external relations.



mind, and Society was made up of small, more or less independent feudal groups, it was recognized that beyond these groups there was an appeal to a wider community which could enforce justice between different grades of the group.<sup>1</sup> With the progress of social organization, this essential act came to involve the provision of other services ancillary to it. It brought about not only the establishment of courts to interpret law and custom, but also methods for the alteration or ratification of these, and equipment for their enforcement. Inevitably, too, the function extended itself from the simple judicial act to the more positive attempt to prevent infractions of justice, and to establish conditions of life wherein justice would be the natural and easy relationship between individual and individual, or group and group. Hence it is possible to see how out of this central purpose, consciously or implicitly recognized by the State, a great variety of activities might arise, the control and regulation of many relationships of life, and the provision of safeguards to secure that the enterprise of individuals and groups should not bring injury to others. But the very abundance of that provision tends to obscure what was plain enough in the less crowded pattern—that all this activity is motivated by the conception of Justice, or to interpret it more amply, by the conception of an order of life in which human personality and its ideals can be realized. For the realization of human ideals is a different thing from the uncontrolled play of human desires. And the institution of the State rests fundamentally on the belief that the quality of life which is open to man under the restraints and limitations of his impulses imposed on him by social organization is higher than any he could attain without these. It is, therefore, essentially moral, involving the shaping of what is by 'what ought to be.' So that, at bottom, the State is the expression of a view of the good life for man. It draws its authority from a more or less

<sup>1</sup> Cf. A. J. Carlyle, *History of Mediæval Political Theory in the West*, Vol. III, Part I, chap. v, and Part II, chaps. v and vi.

explicit conception of human personality, and of an order in which personality may come to the possession of itself. It embodies a scheme of values, and a conspectus of the conditions under which these values may be attained.

In this larger sense, then, we may still hold that the end of the State is the organization of Justice, and that therefore it is pre-eminently a moral institution. This, at least, is the conception of the State which we shall try to work out in some detail. For the only proof that we can give of its truth is that it enables us to see our own way through the complex structure and manifold activities of the modern State, and to trace their affiliation to a single and central purpose. If, and in the measure to which, it does that, it has all the proof of which, in the nature of the case, it is capable.

### § 3. OBJECTION THAT WE ARE DEALING WITH AN IDEAL NOT THE REAL STATE.

But it may be well, before we set out on this task, to return for a moment to an objection that may be taken to our whole method of procedure, especially since it is in reference to the State that it has been urged with the greatest insistency. A critic might state his case thus. "What you propose to do," he says, "is to adopt a highly idealized conception of the State, and then to see how far you can fit it to your facts, or your facts to it. If you do not actually twist your facts, you are extremely liable to that temptation, and at the end of it all your thesis will be quite unconvincing. Why not adopt the simpler and safer method of the natural sciences; examine the various types of State which exist or have existed, and draw your conclusion from that? In that case you are in no danger of confusing the ideal with the actual, or of importing your own notion of what ought to be into your account of what is. That alone is the true method of the sciences—entirely objective and dispassionate. Until man ceased trying to find in Nature what he thought he ought to

find, and began patiently to submit himself to its teaching, his understanding of the world made little progress. And that principle ought surely to govern your inquiry here." To which it is likely enough, though not necessary, that our critic will go on to add, "If you do adopt this common-sense, empirical method, you will find a situation vastly different from that which your preconceived theory envisages. You claim that the State is a moralized and moralizing institution, embodying some sort of vision of the moral good. But no actual State ever directs its policy towards any such ideal. Its actions and its institutions are alike the outcome of a struggle of quite non-moral competing forces. Think of the history of even an ancient and civilized State like England. At bottom, the form of its institutions was, and is, determined wholly by the distribution of power among its various classes. The great mediæval landlords acquired dominion over their serfs simply by the exercise of military power. They retained political supremacy and moulded political institutions to suit their own ends, until the rising power of the capitalist class after the Industrial Revolution wrested a share of the control of the country from their hands. From these, after a bitter fight, the middle classes secured enfranchisement; and now, at this time of day, Labour and Womanhood, grown to a consciousness of their own strength, are trying to win political power for themselves. Never in the whole course of our political history has an idea of human good dictated the action of the governing class. Politics is simply one field of the struggle between the possessing and the dispossessed; and the government of a country is largely an affair of privileged class, personal ambition, and financial and social influence. Morality has nothing to do with it. The whole thing is an affair of force."

The two parts of this indictment are of very different cogency, though both of them are expressive of a point of view which is anxious to explain everything in its lowest terms, and to exclude ideas and ideals as motive powers



wherever a purely material hypothesis is possible at all. The first and more general objection lies not so much against any particular theory of the State as against a method of procedure which characterizes a whole philosophical doctrine. That doctrine has been not inaptly defined as the habit of thought which believes that the clue to the nature of anything is that thing at its best, i.e. at the point of the highest development of which it is capable. And this objection opposes to it the scientific method of taking the thing as it is, and regarding as its true nature not what we hope it may some day become, not even the best of which it has shown itself capable, but its actual normal average being.

In reply to this line of thought, it might be sufficient to refer to the general philosophical statement in Part I. But we are here approaching the problem from the point of view of actual fact: and we both admit and insist that our theory has meaning and significance only in the degree to which it illumines the facts for us. It is proved only if it does so more completely than any other theory. Of this the sequel must be the test. But as the objection rests on a supposed fundamental antithesis between the method which we have chosen and the method of science, it is worth while inquiring here whether this difference is so strong and decisive as has been represented. Is it true that the scientist deals only with "what is," and never with what "ought to be"? It would be hard to maintain that he does. Even in his preliminary work of observation and classification, he has to use types and norms—i.e., essentially, ideals—in order to discover precisely the nature of the object before him. Especially when he deals, not with inorganic substances, but with living and growing things, he has constantly to read the actual by his vision of what it has in it to become. His static categories break down; and final cause, the category of the ideal, is not a philosophical illusion, but a strict necessity of science. More than that, when the problem is, as ours is, not simply one of scientific description, but

of valuation, the discussion of the ideal by reference to which we estimate the worth of any object or act or institution, becomes of paramount importance. It is true that the ideal which the scientist employs is never a mere ideal. It is not an invention of his own, but one which he discovers in the actual, and one which he tests and corrects at every step by reference to the actual. Again we may accept the criterion. Only, what our critic has the right to demand, is not that we should abandon the ideal, but—as we have already admitted—that our ideal should be profoundly and recognizably rooted in the actual.

As for the second and more limited line of criticism, we can bring the matter to the plainest test. It is a sound principle of method that *entia non sunt multiplicanda*: that of two hypotheses the simpler is always to be preferred. But can we explain the whole nature of the State in the elementary fashion proposed? For if we may not neglect the lower forms of State-life, equally we may not omit the higher; and if we must remember that passion and interest have played their part in political life, equally we must remember that many who were most free from these narrowing influences have found in it a field of service which they believed worthy of their highest devotion. And that devotion and inspiration, and the State's agelong appeal to the self-sacrifice of its members, are as much parts of its life and in need of explanation as anything else in its history. The development of our political institutions and the obvious facts of the common service of the State are far too complex things to be explained wholly in terms of economic interest or class rapacity. We have seen reason to believe that even in the industrial sphere economic motives play a decreasing part. And though it is certainly true that many statesmen have used political instruments for their own ends, that many who have been disinterested in purpose have been blinded in part by the prejudices and interests of their class, and that in every grave decision of the State

these lower motives have been and are implicated, it is as false an abstraction to suppose them everywhere and always predominant as to forget them altogether.

We may put our reply to both objections in a word. If to regard a thing as it is, means always to refer our theories to the test of the actual, and never to impose our own desires or imaginings upon it, it is a legitimate demand. But if it means that we must accept things at their face-value, without, so far as we can, penetrating to the springs of their development, or trying to discern what they may become, it is as one-sided and false as any merely *à priori* method could be. And if, as we believe, it is within man's power not only to adapt himself to his environment, but to re-fashion that environment in conformity with the ideals which he discovers in it and in himself, then the veritable nature of any of his institutions lies neither wholly nor chiefly in their past or in their present, but in that profound purpose which at their best he finds implicit in them, and which it is the task of his enlightened, moralized, and socialized will to realize. Neither his State nor his Church nor his family, nor any other social organization is what it can be, and what in the most serious sense it ought to be. But their nature is not to be read wholly in their failure, apart from that which they have failed to be. For it is that which is the immanent source of their movement ; and their true values are those which in this highest form they are capable of expressing.

We may hold, therefore, that these objections do not invalidate our method, though they impose on us the obligation to read our theory in the facts of State-life, and to show that if it is a theory of the ideal State, it is *its* ideal and not merely our own. And bearing in mind the legitimate demand of these objections, we may examine one or two typical forms of the activity of the modern State, first on its administrative side, and then on its legislative. It is important that we should give full weight to the factors which seem to remove the State from the



concerns of individuality and to obscure its character as a moral institution, and see the extent to which our point of view enables us to understand them.

#### § 4. THE ADMINISTRATIVE FUNCTION OF THE STATE.

Perhaps the most impressive thing about the modern State's administrative activity is its vastness and impersonality. When we come into contact with Government departments, say that which directs education or manages insurance or carries our letters, we appear to be touching great self-controlling machines. Most of our relations with them are quite simple, and we are hardly aware of their extent and ramifications. We post a letter ; and it gets to its destination. We send a boy to school and he goes through the ordinary course of study for the prescribed number of years. But whenever we wish to vary this direct proceeding, or to effect some readjustment in the service, we become aware of all manner of complications and restrictions. A letter gets lost, or we want the boy to vary his curriculum in some way, and at once we are aware that we are dealing with a very formidable organization, which will bend itself to suit our purposes only with a good deal of difficulty. In relation to departments of this kind, it seems to be mere verbiage to say that their activities depend on our co-operation, or that these institutions embody a certain level of our moralized will. The most rudimentary analysis of State activity seems to force us back on a clear and important distinction between two kinds ; the one—and that the smaller—conscious and deliberate, involving definite volition and direct participation by the individual citizen ; the other unconscious and mechanical, going on over the heads of the citizens and entirely without their help. Of the first, possibly the service of the Army and the Navy in a time of crisis is the most conspicuous example. But this is plainly exceptional ; and normally we are in contact with the State only through the second kind. They provide

the utilities of which we constantly avail ourselves ; and we regard the State which provides the utilities with much the same eyes as we think of any other organization which does us a similar service. Our attitude, in the main, is thoroughly commercial. The State does certain things for us ; and we pay for these, either in the form of rates and taxes or of a stamp with which we adorn an envelope or an insurance card. We do not really control the service ; it is managed for us ; and we expect it to be. With the difference that we must use and pay for certain of the services which the State provides, whether we wish to or not, whereas we need not travel to America unless we so desire, the State is, for the most part, very much in the same position as the Cunard Line. We do not feel a more personal responsibility for the working of the one than of the other ; and if we should be agitated about any incident in either service, we expect a remonstrance to the President of the Board of Trade or the Minister for Education to receive just as much or as little attention as one to the Managing Director of the shipping line. In ordinary reasonableness, we quite see that these great and complex services can be carried on only by a large body of expert officials, free from the inrush of uninstructed criticism ; and that they must be reduced as largely as possible to routine methods. And what we normally desire is that the service should be good and cheap, available for our use when we want it, and for the rest, leave us free to attend to our own affairs.

How far, then, does this give a true and complete account of the relation of us as individual citizens to a great Government department ? If this is all that is to be said, it is evident that a very large part indeed of the State's activity is purely mechanical ; or at any rate does not involve in any serious way our co-operation and volition, or play an important part in the development of moral life.

We may answer by saying that this account is true, so far as it goes. It appears to be true, and necessarily true, under the conditions of modern life, that a great

part of the State's activity is mechanical in character. It is organized on such a large scale, the problems it has to survey are so intricate and so numerous, that they could not be left to the cursory care of citizens. They require expert officials to deal with them; and the work of these officials is such that we ordinary citizens, occupied with our own concerns, have neither the time nor the experience to understand it. But before we conclude that this mechanization of functions proves the State to be on this side of its life merely mechanical and not moral, we must ask if this account goes far enough. Does it involve that in an ultimate sense these functions fall outside our wills, or that they cannot be thought to embody our common level of moral achievement? It will help us here if we refer to what has already been said on the analogy of the individual life, and particularly to the discussion of habit.<sup>1</sup>

The nature of habit, we saw, is no mystery. It is formed by repetition, sometimes, though not always, under the control of will. We force ourselves to get out of bed at 7 a.m., however much we dislike it, because we think that by doing so we can overtake our day's work better. After a time, if we persist, we get up without any express volition to do so. The action, we say, has become habitual.

Now, this prosaic instance brings out three important points in the analysis of habit. (1) Although, when formed, it operates without any overt act of will, it nevertheless involves will. Will may have been required for its formation, as in our instance; or if the habit has grown upon us without our willing it, its continuance, once we have become aware of it, is due to the acquiescence of our wills. We hold a man responsible for his habits, and that amounts to recognizing that they belong to *him*, that they are the expression of his nature and conform to his will. For all habits are capable of change and modification. However difficult the change may be, it is always possible; and that implies that will is implicated somewhere.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. p. 55.



(2) Habits are economical. They set the will free for its more complex and difficult tasks. They enable us to manage certain parts of our life with a minimum of effort, and to reserve the greater part of our energy for other activities. (3) Habits are always subordinate. It is not in them that the finest and most complete self-expression is found. Consider, for instance, the part which habit plays in the work of the artist. Painting would hardly be possible unless a great part of it were habitual. Whenever a painter determines what precise touch of colour or of line is required in his picture, his technique, i.e. his habit, enables him to produce it. It may do even more than this—it may enter into his decision, or, if you prefer it, his intuition, as to the effect to be produced. But, in any case, it is clear that here habit is subordinate. When it becomes the controlling factor, art becomes stilted and reproductive rather than free and creative.<sup>1</sup>

These three features of habit—the implication of will in its mechanism, its economy, and its subordination—seem to be precisely the features discernible in the quasi-mechanical activities of the State. These mechanical activities are plainly economical; i.e. the organization of the various public services so that they can be maintained at their present level without the continual express volition of the citizens, frees the common energy for further improvements. It is evident that any advance in education would be difficult unless at each stage in our progress we consolidate the ground we have won. We have to set up machinery to secure to ourselves the present attainment of mind and will in this direction. Part of that machinery is established in the form of laws regulating education, and of a department which administers these laws. Some are disposed to argue that the mechanizing influence of such a department makes progress difficult. But it is at

<sup>1</sup> Cf. on this point Professor Stout's discussion of Habit in *Analytic Psychology*, i. 258. Also Professor Graham Wallas's chapter on Habit in *The Great Society*, 258-63.

least as true that without a department of some kind progress would be impossible. It does save each generation from the necessity of learning over again all that its fathers learned of the place of education in social life ; and in that most important fashion, it liberates energy for future advance.

On the other hand, these activities are evidently subordinate. The end of any of these governmental institutions is not the institution itself, but the fuller development of the will that has called it into being. It finds its complete fulfilment not simply in what it itself achieves, but in the larger and freer life which its discipline makes possible. This is not to say that such institutions are unimportant. Just as we can tell fairly accurately a man's character by the kind of habits he has formed, so also we can tell in some degree the character of the State by seeing the kind of institutions which it has thought worth while to establish and maintain. But just as the most revealing test of a man's quality is when he brings his character, trained and disciplined by his habits, to bear on a new situation, so with the State. It proves itself best when it moves steadily and wisely through a new set of circumstances, whether they are trivial or profoundly grave.

These points, we think, are clear enough. But the most critical thing for our argument is the account we can give of the inter-relation of will and mechanism in the working of the State. On this point we must notice, first, that the claim that these great Government departments are carried on without the co-operation of ourselves as private citizens is something of an overstatement. It is true that they discharge their functions independently of the will of any particular citizen. They are indifferent to your co-operation or to mine. But it does not follow that they are indifferent to, and independent of, all of us. They can operate without the help of any one individual, but not without any one at all. Indeed, when we push the matter far enough, they cannot

continue except with the approval or the goodwill, however tacit, of the majority of the citizens. The degree to which these services require the co-operation and approval of the mass of the citizens may be measured in two ways. (1) Most of them require for their carrying on a large equipment of voluntary bodies—County and Municipal Councils, Education Committees, and the like. By means of these a very large number of private citizens come directly into contact with the work of Government departments, and take effective part in it. (2) The work of all these local bodies, and of their permanent staffs, as well as of the Government departments and their officials, rests upon a continuous, though perhaps inarticulate, common will. They require it first of all for their creation, and for their maintenance in being. For the possibility of administering any measure depends largely on whether or not the measure in question is acceptable to the majority of the members of the community. Mere force can never do the work of an administration resting on public will. Further, administrations require this will to support them whenever they are challenged by some recalcitrant force. And finally, there may come periods of crisis which the machinery of the department, local or national, is unable to meet ; and its work cannot go on without the transition of the citizen from implicit volition and indirect service to express will and direct participation. We have an example on the largest scale before us at this moment. The Army is normally a permanent branch of the administrative machinery of the State, apparently requiring from most of us no more than that we should pay for the services it renders, and leave it alone. Now we realize that the contract is not quite so simple, and that the maintenance of that service depends far more intimately on our will than we had been aware. And though we can find no other instance quite so striking, the same thing is, in principle, true of all public services. Ultimately they all of them rest on the will of the citizen to support them, and, if necessary, to take active part



in them. We can imagine, e.g. in the case of a severe epidemic, that the public health services, even the most rudimentary service of cleansing the streets, might become inadequate ; and we should have again to resort to the transition from recipient to agent. And this transition is the clearest proof of the implication of our wills in these services which, at first look, appear to be entirely independent of us. It is because we, as citizens, recognize their importance, and see them to be institutions in which we have a part and stake, since they provide for some genuine interest of our lives, that we are willing to back them with our co-operation.

We may, then, fairly argue that the existence of these great public services, with their complex organizations and panoply of officials and apparatus, does nothing to overturn our view of the State. Rather it confirms it. For it is one of the ways of human progress to get some of the familiar and necessary activities of life into such a shape that they go on of themselves without much conscious interference. And that is precisely what happens in the case of the State. No doubt this process of mechanization has its dangers and disadvantages ; and these are not less in the case of the State than in that of the individual. But that means no more than that it is difficult for all of us, and yet essential to the health of our lives, to give to habit its appropriate place, and to control it by reference to a clearly conceived end or ideal. It does not mean that we can dispense with habit, or that habit falls outside our will and is in itself hostile to our ideal. So that such activities as we have been considering have an important and intelligible place in the life of the State as a moral institution. They are, in their own way, embodiments of will, and conditions of its advance. In the last resort, they require from us, not perhaps the same degree but certainly the same kind of service as those other institutions which we feel to be more intimate expressions of our personal wills.

§ 5. THE LEGISLATIVE FUNCTION OF THE STATE.  
DEMOCRACY.

We may, then, turn to another aspect of the State's activity—its legislative function. On this side, the case for the moral conception of the State seems, at first, to be self-evident. Is it not true that under a democratic constitution—the form of government adopted to a greater or less degree by all Western States—a legislative act on the part of the State involves the conscious will and deliberation of at least those of its members who are enfranchised? The whole machinery of Parliamentary election and of the election of local authorities is designed to secure this end. In theory, no doubt, the case is clear. Yet it is precisely in this realm that we come across the facts which tell most heavily against our view. What is the situation in actual practice, as distinct from this theoretical account of it? We must frankly admit two conditions which militate against legislation's being a true mode of individual self-expression on the part of the ordinary citizen. First of all, the legislating body is remote from the individual; and in the second place, its relation to him is very often twisted and hampered by insincerity. In a vast community such as a modern State, legislation is carried on by means of a representative assembly. Laws are not enacted, as in ancient Athens, by the whole body of citizens meeting in council, but by a small elected somewhat special class, whose training for the most part gives them a point of view rather different from that of those who entrust them with this duty.<sup>1</sup> This small central body is elected for a long period of time; and once in office, it is comparatively free from the pressure of outside criticism. Accidents like by-elections

<sup>1</sup> We speak here, of course, of Parliament. It is true that the personnel of local authorities does not differ greatly from the ordinary electorate in point of social experience. But local authorities, as we have noted, are mainly concerned with administration. They have relatively small powers of initiating legislation;

afford the opportunity for some groups of electors to express approval of or dissent from the doings of their representatives. But the majority of the legislators are secure in their tenure for the duration of the Parliament of which they are members. They need not, unless they please, consult often or closely with their constituents. The only real check on their actions is their desire to be re-elected ; but apart from that, if they have won a seat on any particular issue, they can settle that issue as they wish and proceed to do anything else that seems to them desirable without further appeal to the electorate. Nor is this all. For even this representative assembly is too large and cumbersome for the business of governing a large State. In every country, therefore, there has been created within it a still smaller special authority—in this country, the Cabinet—which is the real power both in legislation and administration. Only a measure initiated or adopted by the Cabinet has much chance of success. Hence, so far from legislative authority emanating directly from individual members of the community, it really belongs to a very small group of men who are doubly remote from the minds and feelings of those whom they are presumed to represent. This small committee is subject to criticism, both in Parliament and in the Press ; and these two organizations might be supposed to embody fairly adequately the judgment of the community. But unfortunately we must qualify this hopeful estimate by recognizing the second of the defects which we saw to inhere in our legislative machinery—its insincerity. Criticism in Parliament and in the Press very largely depends on certain party predilections and prejudices. Again, if the mechanism for the dissemination of news and for the spread of ideas is marvellously perfect, its very perfection means that when it is unscrupulously employed to argue one side of a case and to conceal the other, its degrading effects become most serious. A cheap sensationalist press, skilfully managed, as most newspapers are, and thoroughly indifferent to the ultimate effects of its policy, can easily



sap the political integrity of a large part of the community. By repetition and misrepresentation, and by all the arts of advertising, it can bring an insidious and compelling pressure on individuals, shaping their opinions for them in accordance not with truth and reasonableness, but with interest and passion. Further, since political parties live very much on the sentiment they can engender, and since sentiment can thus easily be produced and manipulated, political organizations can very easily be made the tools of sectional interests, and public life deteriorate into a scramble for sectional advantages. Strong influences can be brought to bear on almost any group of electors, by these instruments that we have just mentioned, or by wealthy employers, or powerful trade-unions; and in spite of all precautions, many of the great interests in the country—trades, industries, churches, landowners, labour-unions, and the rest—maintain as part of their ordinary equipment the means to create a political opinion and voting power in their own favour.<sup>1</sup>

All this, of course, is thoroughly subversive of the purity, and therefore of the moral quality of political life; which will never become stable and honourable until the various parties concerned recognize that their attitude must be governed by the necessities, not of the defence of their own special interests, but of the welfare of the community as a whole. No party or group has the right to place its own prosperity first. It may quite legitimately organize itself to secure that its point of view should be effectively represented; but it has no right to claim or even to desire that its point of view should be, even for itself, decisive on any issue.

It is important that we should set down and rightly

<sup>1</sup> Sometimes such organizations come out openly into the field and avow their express purpose; as, e.g., the Labour Party, which takes the name of a particular, though very large, class, and professed until recently to be concerned primarily with its interests. Sometimes the organizations are entirely private, or even secret; and in this case their influence is more insidious and evil.

estimate all these disabilities that attach to our present democratic form of legislative activity. They profoundly qualify the first appearance of our fashion of legislation as the true and simple method whereby the individual participates in the life of the State, and we are compelled to ask whether after all our democratic ideal is a sound one. We must realize, as Plato realized, and as we in our present stage are very apt to forget, that just because democracy distributes so widely the possession of political power, it is the form of government most open to attack by sinister influences. It is always easy for man to seek first his own interest. And though in a democracy one self-seeker is likely to do less harm than he would if he were a member of a powerful oligarchy, on the other hand the facilities and incentives for the spread of such an anti-social attitude from one to a group are very much greater, and the results, both to social health and individual quality, more disastrous.

Oligarchical methods, of course, have a danger of their own. "Democracy," says Mr. Shaw,<sup>1</sup> "substitutes election by the incompetent many for appointment by the corrupt few." And obviously the most serious danger of an oligarchy is that the absence of the check of possible publicity might introduce corruption on a larger scale than is likely under a democracy. Moreover, there is no easy or certain way of recruiting the governing body that will invariably secure a high level of competence. Even Plato, with his severe system of education and his strenuous methods for eliminating the unfit to govern, had to admit the probability of deterioration. But let us assume for the moment the possibility of government by an aristocracy of talent such as Plato envisaged, and such as has been attained in varying degrees, by several States, at different times in history.<sup>2</sup> Would it not be

<sup>1</sup> Revolutionist's Handbook, *Man and Superman*, p. 228.

<sup>2</sup> It is indisputable that a very great part of Germany's success both in peace and war is due to the resolute and capable organization of her national resources by a governing class. Her

the case that under such a system many of the ends of government would be more completely and adequately secured than they could possibly be under a democratic system?

We put the antithesis thus sharply in order to give full weight to the conditions which operate against the recognition of the State as a moralizing institution and to raise in the clearest way a very fundamental issue. We may answer our question by putting another. Why is it, in view of all we have said, that the whole course of political development, and of what we ordinarily call political progress, has been towards democracy? Not because it is the easiest form of government to realize—for, hard as it may be to select a genuine aristocracy, it is far harder to educate the mass of men to their duties as responsible citizens; nor because it is the safest, nor because all those who fought hardest for it were unaware of its hazards. The reason is rather that it seems to be the "natural" form of government, not in the sense that it is the first in time or the easiest to maintain, but that it is the most appropriate form for a community which has grown to a view of what the State and political life are or can become. It is true that this conception has not always been fully and clearly before reformers' minds, though it has been present to some of them. But it is certainly the view that the inner logic of their proposals demands, and by which their efforts are most completely justified.

What, then, is this view? What ideal of the nature of the State has directed the efforts of reformers towards democracy? Some answers are excluded by our argument. For if the ideal or end of the State were simply to keep order, to secure life and property, to settle disputes between one man and another, to obtain favourable conditions of trade and make good in peace and war its position among the nations of the world—if, in a word, failure to attain a democracy—at least comparatively with the Western Allies—is a favourable condition for the ideal of military power.



it were merely to provide the external conditions of a free and well-developed life, we should find it hard to justify a democratic faith. If, however, the end of the State is not simply government in the sense of securing any or all of these ends, but rather *self-government*, i.e. if it is the furthering of the good life, not only indirectly by the provision of external conditions, but directly, by the creation of an institution, participation in whose life offers to the individual the opportunity of attaining a finer quality of social will, then democracy may be not only the best but the inevitable form of political life.

#### § 6. THE PLACE OF THE STATE IN THE GENERAL ECONOMY OF SOCIAL LIFE.

This then, it seems, is the principle latent in our belief in democratic progress. And we must ask what facts there are in political life, as we see it, which would lead us to suppose it the true view. For it is evident that if this view holds, we can believe that the State, in spite of the imperfections on which we have remarked, is essentially a moral institution, and the sphere of the fuller development of the individual will. What, then, is the place in the general economy of social life that we may without exaggeration assign to the State? It will strengthen our argument if we approach this question from the point of view of those who deny this conception of the State; for by so doing we shall state the case in the way least favourable to our conception. This alternative theory runs somewhat as follows. A community is formed not of isolated individuals, but of individuals who are members of a large number of different societies, in and by which they live. These societies, home, Church, profession, club and so on, are genuine institutions. It is in them that the individual finds his life, and experiences the expansion and discipline of his will. They shape his character, enter intimately into his personality, and offer him the opportunity for self-expression. To them

therefore he owes true moral devotion and service. But all these societies require certain conditions for their effectiveness—safety of property, observance of contracts, freedom from undue pressure by other societies. To acquire these for themselves would necessitate a great complexity of agreements between institutions of all kinds; and perhaps in the end would be impossible. Anyhow, much the easiest plan is to create a special organization whose province it is to regulate the relations of one society and another; so that within the rules which it prescribes, each institution can live its own life without interruption and delay. That organization is the State. Its function is to provide the external environment; “to keep the ring.” It exists simply as a condition for the better life of other, genuine institutions. It is not itself an institution. It is, at the most, an important piece of mechanism, for the upkeep of which we should be prepared to pay. But it plays no constitutive part in the individual life; and therefore never requires any moral devotion or service.

This view plainly puts the function of the State in as humble a way as possible. And yet, if we take it on its own statement, it may involve more than at first sight appears. For if the State is to safeguard contracts, or to prevent the encroachment of one institution upon another, it is evidently committed to the task of determining the legitimate nature of each institution, and assigning to it its appropriate place in a social economy. And if, as sometimes must happen, say in the case of the family or a trade union, the institution appeals to the State to give it a certain authority over its members, it is even more incumbent on the State to estimate the importance of the purpose which the institution embodies, and thereby to prescribe the duties which the individual owes to it.

Clearly, in this view, the State is more than an external mechanism, outside and apart from the truly organic institutions. It has, indeed, a living relation to them all; and exercises in connection with them a function of the most difficult and important kind. It has to resolve

conflicting claims and obligations, and to do that by the test of what is best for the common life of man. The notion that this is a simple function, capable of being discharged by an external organization, rests, apparently, on a misapprehension of the nature of Law. It is assumed that Law is more or less a static body of rules and definitions, regulating quite precisely the relations of specified institutions to one another. Hence all that is required is an authority to interpret the Law, and to support its interpretations, if necessary, by armed force. But this is an incomplete account of the character of Law. It is true that any given decision must be made on the basis of the existing body of Law; but that corpus is always in process of development and change. The change is motivated partly by the necessity for extending the law to cover new institutions and situations; and partly by the deeper understanding of what the highest interest of society requires from its institutions. As we have already noted, the mere maintenance of Law requires its grounding in a common will; and much more this continual process of change requires that the Law should be constantly reshaped to express more adequately the moral sense of the community. Law, indeed, is one articulation of certain common moral principles—though not the highest; and in governing the relations of institutions to one another, it expresses the values which the moral opinion of the community attaches to the different institutions within it.

Hence, even on the account of those who put the function of the State in the barest possible way, that function is still essentially spiritual. It is, in fact, the analogue of the most serious act of the mature individual life—the adjusting of the requirements and claims of different institutions on him, the resolution of the conflict of his divided obligation, and the determination which of them stands for the most fundamental interest to himself and to society. This is the essential act of morality; and its failure is tragedy. Even on its lowest terms, therefore, the function of the State in mediating between institutions



of a different character to one another and to itself is essentially moral. In discharging it, it articulates the general scheme of moral values implicit in the consciousness of the community ; and its fundamental nature is that it embodies such a system.

If, then, we return to our problem of the justification of the democratic ideal, we shall find it in this conception which we have just discussed. And that in two ways. For if the State is to make articulate in some degree a general consciousness of moral values, it must afford the opportunity for the expression of diverse opinions. And secondly, only by the direct participation of the mass of the citizens in the legislative activity of the State can the quality of the moral life of individual and community alike be raised, and the State itself become a more adequate and consistent expression of it. This, it seems, is the true inspiration of a democratic faith. When the citizen partakes of the life of the State, he is called upon to accomplish for himself the moral synthesis which the State must achieve between different institutions. To participate in such an activity freely and intelligently, even in the limited form which is possible under a representative system, is to have imposed on one, or to impose on oneself, the duty of weighing the various modes of common action, not by their effect on any special interest, but by their value for the life of the whole society. It is the individual's opportunity to rise above the level of his own immediate interest, and to identify his own welfare with that of a wide community. That, as we have seen, is how the moral life always develops. Individuality or personality when it begins in the child is small in actuality though great in potentiality ; and the unfolding of the potentiality, the transformation of capacities into powers, takes place in his varied contact with the institutions of the social world. The individual at once enlarges and deepens his personal life ; and his introduction into the active life of citizenship is a further stage in the same process. Hence the justification for democracy is the belief that

the end of the State is not success in commerce, or efficiency in industry, or military power—important as all these things are—but the moral welfare of its individual members. Because it is the province of the State to offer this opportunity for the expansion of personality to the greatest possible number of its citizens, as well as to embody such a level as they have attained, democracy, in the last resort, is the only constitution that will serve for its achievement.

That is why it appears to be the part neither of un-wisdom nor of sloth to look forward to this ideal. It is, we have seen, a more difficult form of government to realize than any other ; and it becomes more difficult in proportion as we are thorough in our demands. A democracy such as the Athenian, consisting of a small number of freemen relieved from the necessity of ordinary toil by the presence of a large slave population, is comparatively easy of realization. But if we believe in the possibility of the good life for a whole community, and exclude none who is capable of contributing in any way to its health, the task is infinitely more arduous. We have seen some of the difficulties that we must meet ; and, no doubt, ere we are in sight of the end there will be other failures and more bitter disappointments. The hopeful thing in our outlook now is that we are none of us content with the measure of democracy that we have attained, or with the quality of such as we have. Discontent shows itself in many ways—sometimes in the attack on the whole political idea, and in the desire to replace political by industrial values ; sometimes in attacks on special parts of the present political organization, such as the Party System ; and sometimes in demands for a devolution of political responsibility to much smaller communities within the existing nation-States. It is difficult to foresee the direction in which we may move ; and no single reform will achieve all that we desire. But it is quite certain that the winning of democracy is not, primarily, a matter of machinery at all. No manipulation of organizations will accomplish

it, any more than the simple extension of the suffrage to the whole adult population. It cannot be attained without these conditions, possibly without the establishment of a fairly complex constitutional system. But these things alone will not bring it about. Its two essential conditions, the enlargement and organization of knowledge and of will,<sup>1</sup> are obvious almost to the point of banality; yet they are hardest to satisfy.

Of course we are liable to be told that now we have completed the truly philosophic circle. We have argued that the end for which democratic government exists is the development of knowledge and will: and now we admit that such a government is itself impossible without a more finely trained and expressive public mind and will than we have yet attained. But the answer is not difficult, even if we do not avail ourselves of the appeal to the Platonic doctrine of Reminiscence. The final cause of any developing thing is the perfection of form of which it is capable: but it can achieve this only by means of that degree of perfection which it has already attained. Its perfection is not imposed from without, but won by the inner organization of its own resources. Or, in more practical language—*solvitur ambulando*. We are not yet a democratic community, though we have moved a long way towards such an ideal. And our progress really consists of the clearer emergence of the conditions which our ideal requires, and our more consistent attempts to satisfy them. We are, even in our perception of failure, preparing the conditions for further advance; and every step we take towards purifying and elevating our political life is itself a step towards the creation of a quality of mind and will that makes new movement imperative.

So that to say that the enlargement and organization of knowledge and will are the essential conditions of true democracy is not to project an ideal which belongs to the distant future. It is to suggest, rather, the more resolute and comprehensive use of the resources which even now

<sup>1</sup> See appendix to this chapter, p. 257.



we possess; believing that that will inevitably open up the way to further progress both of individual and social life.

§ 7. SUMMARY.

We may, perhaps, bring this long argument to a point. Human life is lived always and everywhere within a society; i.e. within a complex of institutions, some large, some small; some voluntary and some compulsory: some national, some cosmopolitan. This Society is in a special sense the environment of human life; the condition of its development to the understanding and possession of its own powers; and it is to this Society, as each of us understands its nature, that he owes his ultimate obligation. What is the place of the State in this Society? We can answer only by defining the function which the State fulfils. If our analysis is right, it is an important and vital function; for the State is the concrete embodiment of the general scheme of values in accordance with which any community arranges its social life. The obligations we owe to each of the special institutions are of very varying kinds, determined always by the seriousness of the purpose embodied in them. We weigh the seriousness of a purpose by estimating its place in a system of the ends of human life; so that we order our loyalties by setting these several institutions into the context of a social experience that expresses with more or less exactness our own conception of life. But that conception must itself acquire a certain objectification, so that it may have authority and stability; and that objectification is the State. "In emotion and in idea," writes Professor Sorley, "man is made by society, in society, and for society, and the social order in which he finds himself and which has fashioned his being has its most comprehensive and best organized expression in the State, to which he belongs, and which has helped to make him what he is."<sup>1</sup>

No doubt it is very imperfect in achievement. We have

<sup>1</sup> *Bedford College Lectures*, p. 32.

noted both the conditions which it must satisfy if it is to fulfil this function, and the extent to which it falls short of them. Yet we have seen reason to believe that in the slow and difficult evolution of its life, its citizens are becoming more conscious of its meaning and purpose, and more resolute to win in a free political life a quality of common experience that will more nearly express the ideal which has inspired democratic progress. The imperfection which at present attaches to it is the reflection of the chaotic character of our social endeavour, and of our failure to arrive at a clear and consistent view of the nature of human life. Its failure is primarily ours; and it is through the institution of the State—the organization in which a community makes articulate its general sense of moral values, and by which, therefore, it can best control its own destinies—that the growing social wisdom of man will most naturally express itself.

As we said at the outset of this discussion, we cannot regard the State as the consummation of the social life of man. The complete expression of his moral purposes can be found only in a community wider in extent than the State. Nevertheless, so far as it goes, it is a synthesis, as coherent as the organized will of man has yet been able to achieve, of his moral interests, ideals, and purposes. Because the perfect synthesis of these is a community that must transcend national boundaries and political frontiers, the State is not the final repository of our moral obligation nor the final object of our loyalty. Yet because it is, for each of us, the most concrete objectification of the order of things which we count good, its claim upon us is very high. If our highest obligation is to a Society that transcends the State, our nearest is to the State itself—that through the spirit of its public life, as well as its legal enactments, we should try to make of it a more adequate synthesis of human ideals, and a more worthy embodiment of the true ends of human life.

## APPENDIX ON THE MENTAL CONDITIONS OF TRUE DEMOCRACY.

In view of the importance of the subject, it may be well to amplify in greater detail what has been said above. The mental conditions of democracy, we said, were two in number : the enlargement and organization of knowledge and of will.

1. The enlargement and organization of knowledge means not only the winning of new knowledge, but also the attainment of a more central and synthetic point of view. The maxim of the physical sciences, *Divide et impera*, has served us well. The isolation of special aspects of the natural world has made its complex facts more tractable to the human mind, and has enabled us to make amazing progress in the understanding and control of the material universe. But it is, after all, only a stage, even in science. And before science can serve fully the purposes of men, it must integrate its own results ; and relate them to the values which man seeks to find in his own life. It is a harder task than science has yet undertaken ; and it is made possible only by the increasing application of biological categories to what was once conceived to be a world of fixed and definite classes. It is significant of the difficulty of the task that the human sciences, in which abstraction is not possible to the same degree as in the physical sciences, have advanced much more slowly. But we may fairly believe that now, when the physical sciences can show us so much in the way of positive results, and when the sciences of biology and sociology are establishing their right to a concrete method and point of view, some genuine synthesis of the sciences is possible, and we shall be nearer an understanding of man's place and work in the world. This involves, certainly,



a far more direct application of the results of science, both physical and moral, if we must keep the antithesis, to the problems of Society. We have first of all to gain and extend our knowledge, or, even more urgently, to make available the knowledge that we have gained; and to cultivate that temper which is the crown of science—the temper that will without fear and without passion make the fullest use in every department of life of the knowledge which we thus possess.<sup>1</sup>

2. It is impossible clearly to sever from this requirement the second and even more arduous necessity of the organization of will. In its simplest terms, it amounts to the need for a far more serious sense of public duty and public responsibility. It is harder than ever now, and will become even harder in the future, for men to consent to be governed. Plato could solve this problem by inculcating the myth of the three kinds of men. "You in this city are all brothers, but God as he was fashioning you put gold in those of you who are capable of ruling ;

<sup>1</sup> For a somewhat more extended treatment of this topic, with illuminating examples, see Professor Urwick's *A Philosophy of Social Progress*, pp. 177-81. It may be permitted to offer one example from a set of problems which greatly occupies us all at the moment of writing. After the war, it will be necessary to redraw the map of Europe. Many sciences will have to be considered in fixing the boundaries of the various States. Military science will have much to say in the determination of strategic frontiers; and for this purpose it will use geography as an ancillary science. Economic science, with the help of geology, will pronounce certain districts as essential to the industrial prosperity of a particular State. Historical science will be called upon to say where ancient frontiers ran, and the effect of these on the present national sentiments of the various peoples. Indeed, nearly all the sciences will quite legitimately be implicated. But the defect of past settlements has been the predominance of one science—generally the military—over the others. And what is necessary is an exhaustive survey of the results of all the sciences, and an attempt to co-ordinate them not only with one another, but with human feelings and values in general. It is this kind of synthesis that one hopes to see govern all scientific thinking and research.

hence they are deserving of most reverence. He put silver in the auxiliaries, and iron and copper in the farmers and the other craftsmen." <sup>1</sup> But men who have tasted of emancipation and have suffered from misgovernment are not to be easily persuaded to accept a natural class of rulers. It is no part of our ideal that they should do so. As a consequence of this, as well as of the perfection of the mechanism for the dissemination of news and of ideas, conflicts of opinion and interest will inevitably be more numerous and serious. Nevertheless, if democracy is to survive at all there must be a readiness on the part of a minority to accept the mind and will of the majority, however mistaken one may conceive that majority to be. This is not to suggest that no attitude but acquiescence in the opinion of the majority is ever justifiable. We shall have to discuss this question shortly. But it is to urge that to reject the constitutionally expressed will of the majority, and to carry opposition to it to the point of threatening a dissolution of the community, is almost the gravest decision that a man or group of men can take; not because it may involve the hostility of the community, but because it is in effect a decision to wreck an institution on which depends much of the progress of mankind. Yet one cannot but be impressed with the levity with which such decisions are taken. There are many examples in the very recent history of our own country. And similarly the most difficult internal problem of the Labour movement is the restraint of the inclination of small groups of malcontents to overthrow the agreements which their leaders have entered into and which have been ratified by the suffrages of the whole Union membership. Any institution which means to endure must rest on the respect of its members for constituted authority, and on their willingness to think first of their institution and to differ from its decrees only with reluctance and sorrow.

Of course, this finer kind of discipline—finer because

<sup>1</sup> *Republic*, 415 (Lindsay's translation).

self-imposed—is the hardest of all to attain. It will be attained, we may be sure, only in proportion as the individual realizes the stake which he and his fellows have in the institution which requires it of him. And that, in turn, depends on the kind of service which he and others are willing to put into it. This is why the organization of knowledge and the organization of will can never be separated, and why we must mean by the former not only the intensive, systematic concerted pursuit of knowledge by those specially equipped for the task, but also its extensive cultivation. The better a man understands his world, the more clearly will he see the social reactions of any of his decisions, the finer will be his own life, and therefore the kind of service that he renders to his world, and the more worthy he will find his world both of his understanding and of his service.



## CHAPTER XII

### THE INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL RELATIONS OF THE STATE

#### § 1. THE STATE AND THE NATION.

WE have discussed the State up to this point without distinguishing it specifically from the Nation. Nevertheless the State can hardly become in fact what we have said it is in idea, until it takes the form of a National State. The process of the development of social life, as we have seen, is one of self-expansion. It is the growing recognition of the kinship of the individual self with the life of the social institutions around him. This wider and deeper conception of the self and of its life begins in the intimate unity of the family, and grows through the varying discipline of each of the wider institutions with which the individual comes into contact. At every stage, the act of participation in the common purpose expresses the community of his life with that of others, and the act itself is the means whereby the wider life is fostered. Yet the wider the group, the more impersonal, or rather supra-personal, its purpose, the more difficult is the act of self-identification. That is why the process can begin only in the family, where affection and feeling constrain a unity of will and interest ; and why the later and larger institutions, if they are to play their parts, must gather round them a mass of sentiment.<sup>1</sup> Much of their vitality depends on the strength of the feeling which

<sup>1</sup> This word is used in the sense which Dr. McDougall has given to it.

they are capable of inspiring. It is, indeed, a legitimate and important part of the function of all institutions, and especially of those which profoundly affect man's life, to organize the sentiment which contributes to their stability and vigour. Such, for instance, is the main reason for the maintenance of the British Monarchy as the outward and visible symbol of the unity of the Empire. Even if a majority in this country were disposed to think that no great constitutional purpose was served by the existence of the Monarchy, we should nevertheless be unwilling to set it aside, simply because it is round the person of the monarch that the sentiment of loyalty to the whole realm most strongly centres, both at home and in the overseas dominions.

It is when a State becomes a Nation that it wins for itself this feeling of personal devotion on the part of its citizens which is, if not the spring, at least the mainstay of its common effort. The boundaries of a Nation are the boundaries of a common sentiment; the boundaries of a State are its political frontiers. The two do not always coincide—never with complete and perfect exactness. Every modern State contains a group or groups of diverse national sentiment; and that is a source both of weakness and of strength. It is a source of strength where national sentiment is not felt to be outraged by the form of unity which the State imposes on its constituent parts; for in this case diversity of national equipment and experience confers variety and adaptability on the resources of the larger State. What in effect takes place is the development of a new national consciousness which still maintains the smaller loyalties within itself. Examples of this kind of unity are fortunately frequent within our own Empire; indeed, the great contribution which this country has made to the political experience of the world has been to prove the compatibility of imperial loyalty with the warmest local patriotism. Many nations, distinct in manner of life, in natural resources, and in form of religious expression, have built up by the co-operation

of some centuries such a stock of common traditions, achievements, and political ideas that the dissolution of the unity of which they are members would appear to all alike a weakening of the inner strength of their own national lives.

On the other hand, a divergence of nationalities is a source of weakness when a group finds itself compelled into an unnatural or artificial unity with those to whom it is alien in feeling. Genuine community of will is impossible; and no matter how mechanically perfect the machinery of government is made, it operates with harshness and embarrassment. Lines of achievement and possibilities of development are closed to the whole State, because even when part of the community is ready for them, the recalcitrance of the remainder forces compromise and a halting policy. The danger is all the greater when the dissatisfied nationality feels its kinship to the people of another State than that under which it is. This condition is one of the most frequent causes of war; and though it is possible that the part which it plays in the modern world is exaggerated, it plainly produces such a posture of things, both within and without the boundaries of the State, that war is fatally easy. Our Empire, even in the home-countries, affords us grave enough examples of this kind of difficulty.

It is hardly necessary to emphasize the importance and urgency of this problem of nationality. The recognition of the right of a genuine national group to the appropriate expression of its sentiment is a corollary of the political doctrine we have discussed; and we have learned that it is a condition of any permanent and rational ordering of the world's affairs. But what precisely constitutes such an "appropriate expression" cannot be decided in general terms. For every problem of unsatisfied national ambition, in the sense of the ambition of a nationality to become a Nation-State, presents special features of its own; and the solution in each instance can be arrived at only by the investigation of all the relevant facts and



possibilities. The conditions of the rise of national sentiment are so varied, that no simple and universal solution can be found. Nationality depends on race, on language, on tradition, on religion, on political or economic ideas and institutions, or on a combination of any or all of these conditions. Which of these factors operate in any particular case can be determined only by a special study of that case; and on this must depend the solution of the problem raised by it. Some nationalities would be satisfied with the recognition of a separate Church, or a separate system of local government, or a separate language, within the unity of a larger State. Others will be satisfied only with complete political independence. Moreover, even if, by some miracle of statesmanship, all outstanding national aspirations were satisfied, we could not assume that that state of things would require no revision. Precisely the same conditions which create existing nationalities might create new groups either within a State, or cutting across the frontiers of two States. The very fact that nationality is a sentiment, and as such is capable of being cultivated or destroyed, implies that the problems it raises can never receive a perfect or final settlement.

Hence there is no single formula which we can apply to every situation: and even if there were, we should still have to justify our application of it to each individual case. For the principle of Nationality is not the highest principle of political obligation. No nation and no State can claim either that the last devotion of its members or that its own supreme duty is to itself alone. As every right within the State has to be justified by its efficacy for the welfare of the whole, so every claim to national existence must be vindicated by reference to the whole community of mankind. But, as a rule, the case can be made with decisive simplicity. For it is only when a State is a nation, and a nation a State, that it can contribute by the free development of its own life to the common store of human achievement. The State, at its best, we have seen, embodies a type of life; for it is a whole

Society in its most effectively organized form—the form which is nearest to us as individual citizens, which has the most intimate relation to our lives, and for which we are in our measure responsible. But the State is not at its best until it is a nation, and no nation attains fullness of effective life until it is endowed with the appropriate political institutions for the expression of that life. For most citizens, membership of a national State is the normal way of fulfilling the obligation to the wider whole of Humanity. In well-worn words, but words which bear much repetition and reflection, T. H. Green wrote: “There is no other genuine enthusiasm for humanity than one which has travelled the common highway of reason—the life of the good neighbour and the honest citizen—and can never forget that it is only a further stage of the same journey.” We have been concerned in our discussion of State and nationality to point out that the life of the good neighbour and the honest citizen needs something of the larger vision, and that at its best it leads outward to the widest community of all. But the other side of the truth—the side which Green here marks—is at least equally important. Not only is it by the smaller and closer groups that we are led to feel our kinship with the whole, but it is through their service that we most helpfully participate in the life of the whole. That is why it matters that the State should attract to itself not simply the formal loyalty but the lively enthusiasm of the citizen; and it can do so only when it becomes his nation and his people.

## § 2. THE LIMITS OF OBEDIENCE.

Patriotism is the name which we give to the feelings associated with nationality. It is a noble virtue—this willingness to subordinate one's own concerns and hopes to those of one's country. When it is disinterested and free from prejudice, when it means the service of the State as the vehicle of the service of God and Man, it is the fine flower of all social virtue. Patriotism, like all

other virtues, is a thing of degree. Real patriotism is of this finest sort, which brings mind, feeling, and will to the service of country and nation. It involves neither uncritical adherence to all that the State does, nor unthinking acceptance of all that the State demands. It recognizes duty to the State to be a form of duty to the whole community of man ; and estimates what the State requires by its bearing on the welfare of the whole. Rightly enough, we value the man who believes in his country and who will stand by anything it does. He is a better man than one who cares nothing about his country or what it does. But we do not or ought not to value him above the man who thinks first of human duty, and serves his country according to the light he discovers there.

It is just here, however, that we have to face a difficulty which is capable enough of simple statement, and fortunately capable for the most part of practical solution, but about which theory has little to say beyond recognizing that in this finite world of hazard and hardship the situation must and does exist. The difficulty concerns the right and the duty of an individual citizen to dissent from the decision of the State. It is only now that this dilemma presents itself in an acute form. For so long as political responsibility was confined to a small governing class, dissent from the decisions of such a group raised no urgent ethical question. But in the degree to which a community becomes democratic, the seriousness of dissenting from a judgment expressed by a public opinion which the individual citizen has had an opportunity to instruct and modify, becomes increasingly great. Not only are the practical consequences more fraught with danger to the stability of the whole State ; since in a democratic community it is easier to weld opposition into a coherent mass, and to bring together into an active body all who conceive themselves to be aggrieved by any government action. Even more critical is the point that such a procedure is destructive of the presuppositions, or rather of the faith, on which democratic government rests. The



first article of a democratic creed is that men are, or can become, reasonable and moral beings, capable of taking decisions on matters of public policy by a deliberate consideration of the bearing of the issues on the ends for which the State exists. On no other hypothesis is democracy even conceivable. Evidently, therefore, membership of a democracy imposes one decisive rule on every citizen ; and that is to assume that just as he has a reasonable ground for the policy which he supports, so others who differ from him may have grounds which seem to them reasonable and valid. His normal attitude, if it is consistent with a democratic faith, must be acquiescence in the decision of a majority. He need not conclude that that decision is right because the majority accepts it. But he must conclude that it appears to the greater number of his fellow-citizens to be the reasonable way of securing a particular end of public policy, and he must, if he is prepared to act the part of a loyal citizen, be willing to carry it into practice. He may legitimately urge his own policy on the attention of his fellows, and use all the methods which are appropriate to a democratic State for persuading them to his point of view. But until he has succeeded in converting public opinion, both the necessities and the presuppositions of a democratic State impose on him the duty of conforming to the will of the majority ; and the State has every right to require such conformity of him.

This, of course, is what normally takes place. But sometimes a point comes at which the individual feels compelled actively to dissent from the decision of the State, either by refusing to carry out its ordinances, or by acting in a contrary way. And if we approach the situation from the side of the individual we can understand how it should be so. We may, for the sake of explicitness, take the example which is most prominently before our attention at the moment—the conscientious objector to military service. The position here is simple enough. The State is and certainly professes to be, a moral institution ;

i.e. it bases its claim to the services of its members on a moral ground. It requires them to defend it, not merely because it happens to represent their country, but because it believes that important issues for the future of civilization depend upon the success of its arms. For the State is, as we have seen, the organized expression of a certain kind of life, and the embodiment of a system of moral and political principles. If, therefore, it finds itself menaced by another Power, hostile to the kind of life for which it stands, it has a duty, not only to itself but to the whole of civilized mankind, for which it is in its measure the trustee, to defend itself; and for that purpose, it may rightly impose upon all its citizens the obligation of military service. There can be no question about the right or the duty of the State to make such a call upon its citizens. Nor, in the particular case which we are considering, can there be any doubt that the imposition of such an obligation is approved by the great majority of the members of the community.

On the other hand, it is equally clear that the individual who is required to assume this obligation must, if he is reflective at all, consider it as an obligation not only to the State, but also to the higher community of which the State is the representative. And he may decide that the State in making this demand upon him asks him to act in a way which he believes to contradict the very nature of this higher community. He may believe that this more ultimate kingdom is founded upon Love, and has no place in it for Force. Acts of violence are a negation of the principles on which it rests; so that if a State were true to its profession as the trustee of this higher kingdom, it would suffer disruption and death rather than offer forcible resistance. Hence for him to take active part in warfare would be a betrayal of his ideal, on which, in the last resort, his loyalty to the State depends. How is he to meet such a situation? Two courses are open to him. Either he can admit that, since a majority of those of his fellows who are capable of forming a judg-

ment are agreed that the assumption of military obligations, so far from being a betrayal of the ideal, is, in the circumstances, the highest service to it, the probability is that their view is right and his own is wrong. In this case, he acquiesces. Or he may decide that by the best light which he can find his own view is right, and that he cannot surrender it; and in this case, he will refuse to act in a manner that contradicts his deepest convictions. Either way, he acts according to his knowledge; his act is *his* act.

It does not follow, of course, that in every case in which an individual fails to persuade himself of the doubtfulness of his own judgment and the possibility of the majority's correctness, he will not acquiesce. He may, e.g., be satisfied that the institution of a tariff system is bad economic policy on the part of the State. But he will not therefore become a smuggler, or refuse to purchase tea. He will do his best to have the tariff laws repealed; but so long as they stand, he will conform to them. And the reason for his difference of attitude, if he can give one at all, is just that an economic mistake is of no great importance. At any rate, acquiescence in a tariff does not commit him to actions which are positively destructive of the higher polity.<sup>1</sup>

It is difficult, therefore, to elicit any kind of universal rule as to when the individual ought to carry his dissent from the findings of the majority to the point of open refusal and rejection. For this is the kind of problem—the problem of where to draw the line—in which we are most keenly aware of difference between our painful hesitation and the intuition of the moral genius. But

<sup>1</sup> It is typical of the fluid character of such distinctions that the question of tariffs is not merely economic. It may have an important moral aspect: a tariff may be an act of hostility to a particular nation; and one's objection to such a tariff might conceivably be based on grounds of public morality. In this case, the problem is more acute, though it is hardly likely that resistance would be the outcome even here.



our working-rule might fairly come to this. When the point comes at which the individual is satisfied that his supreme obligation requires him to will not merely his own death, but the destruction of the State of which he is a member, with all its stored achievement of human good and its potentiality for future development, rather than the performance of the duty which the State requires from him, that is the point at which disagreement must become resistance. Plainly, it is a tremendous resolution to take—ininitely more serious than to put one's own life to the hazard. For the vast majority, it can never arise, at least in a State which has any claim to the name of democracy. But for some few in every age it does arise; and when it does, no other line of action is truly open to them than the refusal of the State's demands. They have not merely the right, but the duty to prefer the higher loyalty; and neither the State nor any other organization can confer on them, or absolve them from, the duty of deciding for themselves what that loyalty imposes upon them, and of acting by that decision.

But this, of course, in no way settles the attitude which the State must take up to such a refusal. There is a current predisposition to believe that once the individual has made his decision, and has given it on the ground of "conscience," the State has no more to do than simply to accept it, and that anything else is "persecution." But such a view is at least far from self-evident, especially since it requires the State to do for the individual precisely what he has refused to do for it. It must acquiesce in his opinion, while he may reject its conclusion. Such an attitude can be maintained only on the assumption that in matters of a particular kind—in this case matters of morality—the State is less competent to form a judgment than the individual. But plainly—especially on our hypothesis of a democracy—there is no ground for such an assumption. It may be that the State is wrong, and the individual right; for it is just as possible for any State to misconceive the nature of the moral world as to err in its direction

of economic forces. But it is no more likely to go wrong in the first case than in the second ; nor is it more probable that the minority is right and the judgment of the majority wrong. Certainly the State cannot order its life on the principle that whenever any one dissents from it it should admit the probability that it itself is mistaken, and therefore permit the individual to follow his own leading. And the State is just as much entitled to insist on compliance with its moral judgments as with its tariff schedules.

Hence it seems clear that the State, if, as in this instance, it is satisfied of the justice of its requirement, may rightly compel the individual to render the form of service which is necessary for its safety ; and if he refuses, it may treat him as one whose actions are hostile to its security. The situation is tragic : a real conflict of obligations, and all the more tragic because on neither side is the obligation lightly regarded. It is the situation in which martyrs are made. For where the individual is right in his resistance to the State, i.e. where he stands for truth as against error and has the nature of things at his back, sooner or later his suffering or loss or even death releases the forces which carry the truth to triumphant recognition. Perhaps it is true that no great cause can win its way except by martyrdom ; it is part of the burden of man's finitude that it should be so. But this should not conceal from us the fact that there are many false martyrdoms—men who are martyrs not to the truth but to their own blindness and recalcitrance. No established authority can succeed in distinguishing accurately between the two kinds. As we shall see, no wise authority will often press the opposition to the breaking-point and create the conjuncture in which martyrdoms of some sort must appear. But equally, and especially at a time when political responsibility is in process of broadening, the individual need not assume that he belongs to the great succession of the martyrs, or that it is mere stupidity and wrong-headedness on the part of the constituted authority that puts him there.

There are, of course, excellent reasons why the State—the stronger party in this conflict—should not press its power of compulsion to the last extremity. These are simply the reasons which support the general policy of Toleration; and within their limits they hold here as elsewhere. Apologists of Toleration from Locke and Milton to Lord Morley have found it easy to show how much of the vitality and integrity of the State's life is lost when it tries to secure a dead-level of uniformity in its citizens. Progress depends on the initiative and enterprise of individuals, both in action and in thought; and the best security which the State has for its future health is to accord a wide measure of freedom to its members to express the utmost variety of opinion and policy. But it is clear that such toleration cannot exceed fairly well defined limits, and that the State has no obligation to tolerate opinions or creeds which appear to the mass of its members destructive of its safety. Toleration, in other words, is always of the nature of a concession, and not a matter of prescriptive right; though it is a concession so essential to the prosperity of individual and social health that it should be of the widest extent possible. So in the particular case which we have before us. The individual cannot claim as a matter of right that the State should release him from military service merely because he has a conscientious objection to it. But the State might well decide that since those who are reflective enough to have formed an independent judgment about their obligations to the highest community are likely to be strenuous in service to, and earnest in thinking of, that community, it ought, as a guarantee of the amplitude of its own future purposes, to respect their conclusions and release them from this particular obligation. It does not thereby admit the probability that their view of the nature of the ideal kingdom is right and its own wrong. But it concedes that variety of view and openness of discussion of the ultimate issues of its policy, and of its relevance to the community which it professes to serve,



are of the greatest value to the right direction of its activities. This is a most ample justification for a "conscience" clause, and one which might reasonably move a liberally minded community to make such a provision.

Thus it seems that when there arises the impasse of a conscientious refusal on the part of the individual to accept the obligation imposed on him by the State, there is necessarily wanting neither the practical adjustment nor the theoretical basis of that adjustment. What is wanting is any theoretical rule to determine when the State shall admit compromise, or when it must exact the full discharge of its requirements. That is a problem for statesmanship, working on the full knowledge of the exact circumstances of the case. All that theory can say is just that as it must rarely happen that the individual should find himself compelled actively to dissent from a constitutionally taken decision, so it must rarely happen that when a genuine and serious objection is ascertained, it is necessary for the State to override it. But one can hardly doubt that cases may occur when the duty of the individual to refuse and the duty of the State to compel are both absolute. And in the face of that tragic situation, theory has no solution to offer.

In this section we are not discussing the motives which led to the insertion of the "conscience" clause in the Military Service Acts of 1916. No doubt such considerations were present: but other factors such as expediency operated as well. Our problem is the ethical and political issue involved in such a clause: and on this point the argument that has been given furnishes the only reasonable basis for the State's recognition of a conscientious objection. It is a matter for regret that the subsequent treatment of conscientious objectors by the military authorities showed how little, in some quarters, the real meaning of the State's concession was appreciated.

## § 3. INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS.

We may conclude our discussion of the State and the nation by remarking briefly on the subject of international relations. Perhaps not so long ago, it would not have appeared anomalous to omit all consideration of this topic from an argument of this character. But it is plain, from the implications of our whole position, no less than from the inexorable logic of events, that we may not safely pass it over. We have tried to make it clear that no nation can pursue without reference to others the ends of its own life ; for, at its best, its life is but a phase of a wider life and incomplete apart from it. The concerns of one community are not merely private. Ultimately they affect every other ; for the end of all States which are critically conscious of their own lives must, we have maintained, be the same ; and no single State can get very much nearer the achievement of that end unless others advance in the same direction. Apart from all theory, the elementary facts of economic life are against an attitude of indifference to other nations. No nation subsists without foreign trade ; few could do so even if they wished. Just as the more abundant provision of the means of physical life draws different families into the bond of economic relationship, so that through specialization, co-operation, and exchange the resources of each are increased, so on a large scale with the family of nations. In the small community any increase in efficiency and skill on the part of one group of workers, though primarily an advantage to these workers themselves, involves potentially at least and most probably in actual fact an increment of the consumable wealth of the whole society. So also in the larger. An increase or a diminution of integrity or intelligence or skill, or any condition that is likely to produce such a result, is chiefly the concern of the members of the State affected, but in a less direct way it touches the welfare of other States also. And further, just as the economic union of the

smaller groups is the framework of multiple associations for the higher ends of social life, so also the economic relations of States ought to be the outer environment for a common life of mind and will. To some extent it is so. Yet it can hardly be doubted that our failure within the limits of the State to make the economic framework subservient to higher purposes is vastly intensified in inter-State relations. There the economic organization has so outstripped in complexity and power the more slowly built fabric of common spiritual life, that it threatens either to choke the latter, or to constrain it under mechanical and economic bonds, rather than be constrained by it. In the sphere of international relations, no less than in the relations between Capital and Labour within a State, the double effect of modern industry is very plainly evidenced. On the one hand, the production of the goods which are the material wealth of human life, and in regard to which all parties are interested in getting the highest obtainable total, is a force making for union, co-operation, and amity. But the distribution of that total, when the economic interest of each is for the biggest possible assignment to himself, is a force operating in precisely the opposite direction.

It is hardly open to doubt that the failure of the States of the world to subordinate the economic to the ethical motive, both within their borders and in their dealings with one another, is the most powerful source of wars and kindred social evils. The two problems of internal and external relations are really one ; and neither will be solved before the other. So that, corresponding to the problem within the State of devising methods of controlling the economic motive by reference to ethical and political ends, there is in the international sphere the problem of subjecting the economic relations between States and between citizens of different States to a similar constraint. Within the State, these higher ends have already objectified themselves in powerful institutions, so that the line of advance there is prepared. But in international relations



we are still without such institutions ; and perhaps not fully conscious of the community of ethical interest that requires them. Hence the problem of international relations is twofold : first the creation, or the revelation, of a basis of interest and will ; and second the establishment of such institutions as will not only secure this common will against usurpation by the meaner forces of economic gain, but also control the economic relations between States, in conformity with the conditions and necessities of their higher spiritual life. This is, no doubt, a counsel of perfection. But it is, at the same time, a counsel of the plainest common sense ; for it is the only way in which any solution is possible.<sup>1</sup>

And perhaps it is worth while pointing out, by way of warning and by way of hope, that the problems which are fraught with danger to the peace of the world are precisely those in which the economic motive is most crudely operative. These are the problems connected with the opening-up of the less highly developed parts of the world.<sup>2</sup> If it were possible to restrict the economic relations of civilized countries to the exchange of commodities among themselves, probably no very serious threat to mutual friendship would arise. For exchange is simply an enhancement or extension of production,

<sup>1</sup> We are not wholly without the beginnings of such international arrangements. Examples are the Telegraphic and Postal Unions and the Commission on the Navigation of the Danube. In these cases, problems which are primarily economic, and which might have given rise to exploitation and therefore friction, have been regulated by joint administrative action which secures equitable treatment for all concerned. But these questions are tractable because it is obviously to the economic interest of every one that a peaceful and equitable solution should be found. What is wanted is that peoples will be as quick to recognize their community of ethical interest, and create institutions expressive of that. For the facts about international arrangements, cf. L. S. Woolf, *International Government*, p. 122.

<sup>2</sup> For a very vivid discussion of this whole question, see Mr. H. N. Brailsford's *War of Steel and Gold*.

and it is advantageous normally to both parties concerned. But as it happens, the greatest profits do not come from such exchanges, where conditions do not often permit of exploitation or of undisputed control of all sources of supply. The discovery of a new market, especially in a country where it is possible to establish a monopoly and to secure some degree of authority over the inhabitants, offers a far more lucrative field. For such a country gives the opportunity not only for very profitable trading in the ordinary way of exchange, but for the most remunerative investment of capital. Labour is cheap, natural resources are great; and the return to judicious expenditure is far greater than in a settled and civilized land. Hence among enterprising commercial nations there is a severe competition for "spheres of influence"—i.e. for tracts of rich and undeveloped country where one nation can establish itself predominantly and secure for itself the major share of the return to this kind of undertaking.

Obviously, in this kind of scramble there are endless possibilities of friction, for the good reason that each group is seeking simply its own interest, and seeking it by means which necessarily react against the interests of others. And so long as in their dealings with the comparatively undeveloped parts of the world each of the civilized nations acts on the principle that its own economic interests are paramount, so long must the friction continue. The situation is quite blatantly immoral, and can only end in disaster. Here, plainly, the difficulty can be solved only in one way—the control of the economic motive by a high sense of responsibility not only to other civilized nations, but to the inhabitants of the new commercial area. Such control is peculiarly difficult here, where concealment of abuses is fairly easy, and where the temptations are very great. But there is no denying its urgent necessity.

And no other solution will serve. It may be argued that when the Great Powers have parcelled out all the known world among themselves, no occasion for friction

will arise between them. But apart altogether from the difficulty of arriving at any distribution which will satisfy the ambitions of the Great Powers, and apart from the exceeding instability of any such arrangement, this still leaves unaffected, and even aggravated, the fundamental immorality of the whole position—the attitude to the weaker peoples, and the tacit recognition of them as suitable fields for exploitation by the stronger. Or it might be argued that the solution would be the complete withdrawal of the Great Powers from these areas, leaving only private traders without their protection, and allowing the native inhabitants to impose on the traders whatever conditions they thought fit in their own interests. But such a course, though it may relieve the official conscience, neither satisfies the wider requirements of this problem nor exhausts the moral responsibility of the Powers to less civilized peoples. It wrecks itself on the ground that very few uncivilized or barbarous peoples are fit to endure contact with the white man without deterioration; and very few white men are willing to impose on their commerce the restrictions which alone can save the native race. Hence if supervision were wholly withdrawn from the intercourse of civilized and uncivilized, the final condition of things might well be worse than it is now. Deterioration on both sides is inevitable; and if the uncivilized communities are to retain anything of their integrity, and the traders anything of decency and honour, intervention by a responsible Government is essential in the interests of both. To protect the weaker from degradation by the action of unscrupulous traders, and to secure for traders, under appropriate restrictions, the opportunity to make the resources of a new area available for the consumption of the world is the first function of civilized Governments in relation to less developed peoples. And it is impossible, except in the very few cases where a strong native Government exists, to find any substitute for a civilized Government in this most necessary duty.

But it is just here that the difficulty emerges. For it



is, if not as easy, at least as possible for a Government to exploit such a situation as it is for the private trader. And even if it evades that temptation, it is apt to try to procure for itself a more favourable position in the new country than it allows to any other nation ; and it may with some appearance of reason regard such an advantage as only a legitimate recompense for the assumption of the responsibility of government. Hence every such extension of the sovereignty of a nation is jealously watched by other nations ; and in every one there is a danger to international peace. And what is worse is that the favourable position which the protecting Power claims for itself almost inevitably extends to actions which diminish the strength and independence of the native people.

So long as this attitude of mind continues, it is hard to see what alternative there is to the cold-blooded partitioning of the less developed parts of the world among the more fortunate nations, with an almost complete neglect of the real needs and interests of the subject races, and therewith an almost complete destruction of moral standards.

It is not true that this has been the creed or even invariably the practice of European nations in dealing with their native territories. But it is impossible to pretend that anywhere there has been the same vigilance for the rights of natives as for the safety and prosperity of the civilized settlers. And, as was remarked at the outset, the only solution of this condition, dangerous to all parties alike, is the expansion of the sense of responsibility, and the control of the relations of civilized to uncivilized, not in the interest of the former, but in that of the latter. Even this solution will take long enough to become effective ; for the atmosphere of distrust is not easily dissipated, and the baneful tradition of commercial profiteering will die hard. But there are certain obvious measures which would at least accomplish something in the right direction, and mark the conscious adoption of a more honourable attitude on the part of

the great States of the world to their less developed fellows. A policy of equality of opportunity for all traders in every area which is under the protection of one of the civilized Powers would clearly be a notable step. This does not imply that traders of all nations should be allowed to operate without restriction: for severe restrictions may well be necessary in the interests of the native population. But whatever restrictions are established ought to operate equally against all traders, without any special privilege for members of the protecting nation.

In a word, there is one great requirement, easy to define, however difficult to carry out in practice, which the moral exigencies of the situation impose. The only justification for one nation assuming the responsibility of governing another people is moral. For a merely economic gain such an assumption is indefensible; for it is the negation of a fundamental moral principle that human life is an end in itself and not a means. When, therefore, intervention of the kind we have described becomes necessary, its manner must be congruent with its purpose. Its guiding principle must be the moral welfare of the subject-people, not the advantage of the rulers. And its line of action is fairly clear. It must conserve and develop whatever native capacity there is for civilization, encourage the growth of whatever institutions are best adapted to the native habit of mind, open up to the native people such of the methods and resources of Western civilization as are appropriate, equip it with kindred cultural instruments, and offer something of the discipline and training that promise to forward the growth of a vigorous political life. Above all, since self-government is the condition of social health and moral welfare, the first endeavour of the ruling nation must be to prepare the subject people for the exercise of that power. It must regard its rule as a trusteeship and not a dominion, and be ready to surrender it when the ward grows to political maturity. It is, in truth, hard enough to see in any given case precisely how this can be done, or to determine the degree

of control with which a people can be endowed without disaster to themselves. There may be some peoples who are incapable of real political life, and who must, so far as we can see, remain in a condition of permanent pupillage. It would be almost as grave a breach of trust prematurely to grant complete political freedom as never to contemplate doing so at all. The settlement of all those problems, and the selection of means congenial to peoples of widely different capacities and histories are tasks of the very highest difficulty. They will be accomplished only by nations with a lively faith in the possibilities of the human spirit, and a sense of their responsibilities to the world. But, under these conditions, we have some right to believe that they can be accomplished ; and it is certain that they can be accomplished under no other.<sup>1</sup>

The elevation of public conscience which the assumption of such an attitude implies is possible in the fullest degree only when European States become enlightened democracies. The fact that none of them is so, and that they are at the most various stages both of enlightenment and of democracy, and therefore of mature political responsibility, makes the existing problem more complicated and difficult. The possibility that one Power can direct its resources to colonial exploitation makes it harder, though not less necessary, for better intentioned Powers to adopt a more honourable way. Perhaps it is here, if anywhere, that civilized States have the duty of reviewing the actions of one another. In matters of internal policy it is hard to see how any good result can follow from the interference of one Power with another. Not that the external Power has no interest in such matters, but simply because they are more likely to right themselves if they are left to the care of those who are most intimately concerned. It is safe to assume that a civilized State has enough energy and public spirit to secure tolerable conditions for its members, and to direct its own affairs without

<sup>1</sup> The prospect of effective reform in this direction depends greatly on the achievement of a League of Nations.



disastrous injustice. If the assumption is unjustified, the inner weakness of the State will soon enough, without outside interference, issue in new political groupings.

But the case is different when a powerful nation is willing to secure its own advantage at the expense of a less powerful or less civilized people, as, unfortunately, every Great Power is sometimes tempted to do. It is true that the conscience of most States is alert enough to stop most overt actions of this kind; but the situation is all too plainly possible. And when it does arise, it may be necessary for other nations to intervene. It cannot be maintained that even here intervention is always a duty. For though the bare facts of the situation are that moral relationships have been overthrown by a simple appeal to force, it is possible that when the issue is clearly defined, the side of morality may rally to itself strength enough in both communities to resist the invasion of injustice, whereas it is certain that outside interference will inevitably obscure the essential situation. It is always better that wrong-doing by any community should be overcome by the outraged sense of justice of that community itself. But where that possibility seems on any reasonable view of the probabilities to be excluded, one cannot doubt that there, there is imposed on other nations, not merely the right but the duty of intervention. Plainly the intervening nation accepts a vast responsibility. It is never itself impeccable, and between nations the question "Who made thee a judge and ruler over us?" is as hard and as pertinent as between men. But the answer in both cases is the same—the moral necessities of mankind. And the responsibility of one nation for the actions of another is not different in quality from the responsibility of one man for another.

At the same time, we cannot suppose that the situation as it is at present is one in which we can permanently acquiesce. Individual men have defined their responsibilities to one another, and they have created an institution capable of determining the manner and degree of their

fulfilment. The possibility of orderly and humane relationships between man and man, without which no progressive social life can be ensured, depends on the maintenance of such an institution. One can hardly doubt that until some analogous provision has been made for the determination of national responsibilities and of inter-State relations, mankind in general will not secure the conditions under which alone a healthful and vigorous social life can fully develop.

The essence of the arrangement as it holds between individual members of a single State is that each surrenders his power to act on his private judgment, and brings the matter on which he thinks action should be taken before some tribunal which is vested with the authority of the whole community to decide upon issues of such a character, and to enforce its decision. A does something which B construes as an injury to himself or to C, who is perhaps less capable than B of defending his own interests. B does not thereupon proceed to exact vengeance from A, either on his own behalf or on that of C. He lays an indictment against A before some established court; and if he makes good his charge, A has to endure the appropriate penalty. The advantages of such a procedure are twofold. First the judgment on which action is taken has some chance to be as nearly just as human wisdom can hope to make it. At any rate, it is impartial; it is based on a full account of the facts, and is free from the prejudices and passions of the conflicting parties. And in the second place, it is effective. If A is in the wrong he endures the penalty which he might escape if B and C should happen to be too weak to inflict it on him. Such an arrangement enables men to go about their business on the assumption of reasonably secure and intelligible relationships with others. They need not spend half their energy in resisting invasions from others, or conducting a private warfare against those from whom they have suffered or on whom they have inflicted injury.

But this chaotic and ineffectual situation, which has so largely been superseded as between individuals in a civilized State, is precisely the condition which obtains between States themselves. There is no central authority to govern the relations of States; so that if State A injures State B, B can exact reparation only by the might of its armed forces, and the whole issue is removed from the sphere of justice to that of physical strength. Or if, in the more critical case, A takes advantage of the weakness of C, C has no hope of redress unless some stronger Power is sufficiently stirred to challenge A in C's behalf. In the nature of the case there can be little attempt to arrive at a balanced and impartial judgment on the situation, and the warring nations are committed to a long-drawn series of feuds as disastrous to their progress as a vendetta between private families.

The situation is evidently anarchic. It has neither of the elements that make for security in the civil relations between man and man in a settled community. There is neither the reasonableness to ensure a fair judgment nor the power to make such a judgment effective. What is required to achieve those conditions is just what achieved them within a single State—a central and impartial authority the representative of the moral sense of a whole community charged with the duty of deciding, and equipped with the power both to prevent private decisions and to enforce its own. That is the immediate ideal which international politics must strive to effect—the first and chief form in which international goodwill can permanently organize itself. We are still very far from achieving anything of the kind; and until we do achieve it, civilization does not possess the mechanism for securing even its bare continuance. But it is clear that the way to the attainment of this ideal is not a greater measure of indifference between nations as to one another's affairs and actions, but a greater measure of concern. Bad as the present situation is, there is one worse—that in which no nation



accepts any responsibility for safeguarding anything but its own immediate interest. And until, in some form or another, the ideal of a tribunal on international relations is effectively established, it is not the least of the duties of a civilized Power to accept the burden of preparedness to vindicate international right, whenever it sees, to the best of an honest judgment, that it is endangered or broken.

#### § 4. INTERNATIONAL RIGHT.

How hard such an effective establishment is, we can learn from many things in the recent past. Apart from those economic conventions which we have mentioned, international agreements hitherto, when not directly aggressive in purpose, have in the main been designed to afford the contracting nations some relief from the burden of armaments by arrangements to act in concert with one another in the event of an attack upon either Power by some third. The military alliances between Germany, Austria, and Italy and between France and Russia, and the naval convention between France and Great Britain, were all agreements of this sort. Such agreements have a certain value, since they are professedly defensive in principle and therefore embody a recognition that wanton aggression is not merely an affair between aggressor and aggrieved. But they suffer from an inevitable tendency to become more than merely defensive engagements, and to call into existence competing groups of Powers; so that the original purpose is forgotten and the world is divided into two or more armed camps, with the constant threat of each side to appeal to arms.

There is more hope, therefore, in agreements such as that in force between Great Britain and the United States that any matter in dispute between them shall not be a *casus belli* until the expiry of a certain time after various forms of mediation and arbitration have been unsuccessfully tried. The difficulty of agreements of this sort,

even apart from the fact that nations are apt to exclude from their scope matters "affecting their vital honour," is that during a period of strained relationships and mutual suspicion it might be impossible to prevent the outbreak of war. But evidently the greater the number of nations jointly making agreements of this kind with one another, and all of them pledged to see that any two disputing parties rigidly observed the terms of the agreement, the greater the security for fair-dealing and peace. Perhaps it is in this direction that we can most hopefully look for immediate advance.

But not even this, though it would do much, would ensure that every issue would be settled by right. War would still be possible; and what is even more important, the threat of war might still be a factor in the settlement of disputes between State and State. International justice, like justice between individuals, requires, not so much that wars should cease, as that physical force should not be a consideration in determining the solution of questions to which such force is irrelevant. Wars would cease, then, as a matter of fact, because they would be perfectly meaningless. And the object of satisfactory international arrangements is not primarily to secure peace, but to secure right, and thereby to make war impossible by making it as impotent to settle an international issue as the size of a man's muscles to settle a civil action.

Hence it is clear that the finally satisfactory embodiment of international justice must take the form which we have indicated—a kind of world tribunal.<sup>1</sup> Something of the sort already exists in the Hague Tribunal. But

<sup>1</sup> For an admirable discussion of the constitution and powers of such an International Court, see Mr. H. N. Brailsford's *A League of Nations* and Mr. G. L. Dickinson's *The Choice Before Us*. Both writers draw a clear distinction between disputes which are "justiciable" and those which are not, and make proposals for dealing with both cases. Both writers also offer a most candid and illuminating discussion of the difficulties of constituting and of maintaining an International Court. Here we are concerned only with the source of these difficulties, the doctrine of State sovereignty.

what is necessary is that such a court should have the power to compel all disputants to accept its jurisdiction and its judgments. To this end, it must possess force sufficient to coerce that of any single nation or group of nations. In other words, each nation must reduce its warlike establishment to the level of a police force ; except in so far as it contributes its quota to the upkeep of an international force, which will be the weapon of the court of all the nations.

Against this conception there are certain plain objections and many serious practical difficulties. It can, e.g., be argued that such a court—which, after all, must consist of a number of highly fallible human beings—in possession of overwhelming armed power, might become the instrument of a tyranny undreamt of in history. It is possible. For if such a court were once corrupted, nothing could prevent its usurpation of functions which do not rightly belong to it, and its interference in the domestic affairs of the various national communities. The answer is that the objection lies, not against this particular court, but against all forms of government. Government must equip itself with power ; and it may abuse it. In that case, there is only one remedy, tragic and often ineffectual, the remedy of revolt. It is a perfectly conceivable case that just as the individual may accept the dire necessity and duty of rebellion against the State, so in the last extremity the individual State may be constrained to revolt against the authority to which it owes its allegiance. It may be compelled to do so in virtue of that same loyalty for which the individual may revolt against it—loyalty to the highest interests of humanity as it sees and understands them. No machinery can extirpate the possibility of finite error and sin. Nothing will prevent conflict and tragedy. It is part of the risk which we must run in all human achievement. But at least we can reduce the occasions of such conflict to the slenderest minimum, and secure that if it does arise, it is for a cause not unworthy of the tragic suffering which it evokes.



Far more immediately pressing than the difficulties which may arise if such a tribunal is established are those which operate against its establishment. The essence of them is that such an institution involves the surrender of unconditional sovereignty on the part of the separate States. And the difficulty of such a surrender is due, not merely to the reluctance of *de facto* governors of States to give up certain of their privileges, but to a quality, fundamental if perhaps temporary, in the character of States themselves. The vitality of States, as we noticed, is drawn from their nature as organizations and embodiments of particular types of civilization and ideas. They represent an experienced unity of manner of life and political principle ; and in virtue of that experience and of its value, not only to the members of any one community, but to the whole world of mankind, the State rightly requires a full measure of service from its citizens. Its sovereignty therefore is not an arbitrary claim, but the outward expression of its place as the guardian of an experience which matters supremely to a fully articulated and developed human life. Hence until mankind, or some considerable portion of it, has attained a still wider community of experience, of something the same degree of intensity as national feeling at present is, it is hard to see how any organization expressive of and resting upon such an experience is either possible or justified. A constitutional arrangement which answered to no genuine body of sentiment or experience, and which was merely designed to prevent certain evils such as war, would be anæmic and ineffective from the outset. And if we are to set about the creation of such an institution, as we have tried to show, we must first recognize the conditions without which our efforts would be vain. The first step is the enlargement of international experience.

Fortunately, the instruments are ready to our hands. The ideal to which we move was typified by the empire of the Church ; and what we seek is the restoration, not of the uniformity of doctrine, but of the community of

spiritual experience of which, in its limited way, the Holy Roman Empire was the symbol. Only that experience must embrace more of the diverse activities of the mind of man, and make its appeal to many more of his interests. That is why the increasing mechanization of the modern world, though at first sight it multiplies the opportunities of conflict, may also become the instrument of community. The world is contracting, and in far more intimate ways than merely by a rise in the price of beaver can feel the unity of its movement. Industrial conditions tend to produce the same problems in every nation, and interchange of social experiments is largely possible. Art, literature, and philosophy, though each of them springs from a native soil and is inseparable from the personal and national experience which it interprets, are yet all concerned with the larger features of that experience, and may help to universalize it. And it may be that the most enduring legacy of these years of suffering will be the heightened understanding of the community of the simplest and deepest joys and sorrows of human life.

But such forces as these work neither certainly nor swiftly. If we remember how difficult it is for ourselves to devise some effective constitutional embodiment of the unity of the British Empire, we may understand how infinitely harder it is to induce peoples with less community of sentiment, language, thought, and tradition to surrender something of their sovereignty to a union of the whole world. And great as are the difficulties of establishing a real community of life between the nations of the West, they are far greater when we try to include the rising nations of the East.

Yet the instruments are there, if we have the will and the courage to use them, and if we understand what manner of kingdom we build. And we may recall, from our first analysis of institutions, that all institutions not only repose upon, but in some measure create and sustain, the will which is implied in their making. Hence every

step in the organization of this community of experience is itself a guarantee and a starting-point of further progress. It may be, though we cannot prophesy, that the achievement of some measure of international organization, say for the limited purpose of determining certain disputes between nations, will itself provide the environment for the growth of such a body of common sentiment as would inevitably express itself in organizations of a far more comprehensive kind. The State, said Aristotle, came into being for the sake of life ; but it is maintained for the sake of the good life. So with this wider organization. It may come into some attenuated form of being in order to provide stable conditions for the life of separate peoples. But, in the silent progress of the generations, it may achieve a greater depth of purpose, expressed in a multitude of new institutions and activities, and through these offer to individual men and peoples a higher kind of common life than they have yet known.

Whether or not this ideal is true rests with the creative will of man to declare. All that we dare positively to affirm is that if our widespread and passionate movement to a free democracy has its roots in the nature of things, so also has this ideal which we have drawn. Democracy rests on a view of the moral nature of man ; and its principle will be satisfied with nothing short of an enthroned world rule of justice. But democracy is attainable only if a nation understands and accepts its arduous conditions—discipline, self-sacrifice, and devotion to the best it can find. Precisely those conditions will achieve an organization of the common will and aspiration of the world. The end is far off ; for we are far from appreciating the severity of the democratic ideal which comes so readily to our lips. But if *that* is genuinely open to us, if it is the authentic incentive of our political endeavour, then truly all things are possible



## CHAPTER XIII

### CITIZENSHIP AND RELIGION

#### § 1. THE PROBLEM OF CHURCH AND STATE.

IN these lectures we have, it may be hoped, made clear what we mean, on the one hand, by citizenship as the consciousness of our common life and as the embodiment of the organic system of our social interests, and, on the other, by the State as the organized body within which this consciousness works, at once supporting and supported by it, realizing the capabilities of the individual as a social being and realized by them. By "religion" in what follows we shall mean the consciousness of our deepest interests as centring in and bound up with the reality of supra-social goods such as are summarized in the trinity of truth, beauty, and goodness. By "Church" we shall mean any organized body that claims to be the witness and interpreter of this reality and to influence the thoughts and actions of its members through their belief in it.

In the account we have tried to give of civic society as thus interpreted we have had little difficulty in recognizing the high importance of the claims of the State. When, however, from needs such as those represented by the family, industry, education, we pass to religion as just defined, we are met by the difficulty that the interest for which it stands seems to transcend in depth and seriousness, not only those represented by subordinate societies and institutions in the State, but that which is represented by the State itself and to clothe the institution which seeks to satisfy it with a higher right. It is this claim that

has been the ground of the conflict between Church and State in the past. It might seem, indeed, that changes in thought and practice have in modern times led to an approximation and largely removed the ground of this conflict. We believe that this is so, and it is our object in the present lecture to show why it ought to be so. But the first result of this approximation has undoubtedly been to accentuate the antagonism. So long as the function of the State could be conceived of as concerned merely with the external conditions of life, such as the maintenance of order and the mechanical supply of certain economic services, so long it might seem possible to assign separate functions to Church and State. But as the State has risen to a truer sense of its responsibility as including, not only the guardianship of material rights, but the development of the powers and capabilities of its members, it was bound to come more and more into rivalry with the organization which had hitherto a monopoly of spiritual functions. At the present day it is not too much to say that the conflict has been hottest just in those spheres in which, as in education, the State will admit no limit to its interest in the spiritual well-being of its members. And equally from the side of religion the growing insight into the dependence of spiritual on material well-being, of the moral health of the community upon its laws and institutions, has made it impossible for the Churches to confine themselves to a service of spiritual things having no reference to political and industrial organization. They can no longer accept the position of passive observers of the great secular controversies of our time. It is the failure to recognize this change in theory and practice that makes the treatment of the relation of Church and State by the able and suggestive author of *The Churches in the Modern State* so barren in its applications. Dr. Figgis has rightly perceived that the question of our time is no longer that of the rights of the individual, but rather of societies within the State against the State itself. He sees, further, that the rights of the Church cannot be

the creation of legal enactment or in any way dependent on the goodwill of the State, but accrue to it in virtue of its possessing a history and tradition and through these a real will and personality of its own. But he has failed to follow modern thought and practice in the attempt to reach a point of view from which the old antithesis between inner and outer, secular and sacred, is seen to be an anachronism,<sup>1</sup> with the result that when he turns to practice his conclusions are so hesitating and compromising that they altogether fail to produce conviction. It is just the artificiality of all such distinctions that constitutes the main difficulty before us to-day. Hence the only promising line of solution is through a closer consideration of the precise relation between the civic and the religious consciousness.

## § 2. FROM PLATO TO ROUSSEAU.

So stated, the problem is not a modern one. It is as old as reflection on the relation of civic life to the whole circle of human interests, including the interest in "contemplation." So long as religion was conceived of as piety to a national god or national gods, as in Israel or Greece, it was possible for the highest expression of it to be conceived of as identical with the highest expression of citizenship, and Socrates was only summing up the spirit of ancient civilization when, in the name of the gods above and their brethren the gods below, he refused to betray the laws of Athens by complicity in the plot of his friends to effect his escape from prison. But the synthesis of religion and citizenship that was reached in the ancient State, in failing to do justice to the fullness

<sup>1</sup> "What I am anxious to emphasize is that primarily the business of Christians is with the moral standard of their own Society and with themselves as its members. The attempts to confuse this object with that of securing a better social organization, to be imposed by law on the whole nation, seem to me likely to enfeeble the former without ultimately strengthening the latter" (*Churches in the Modern State*, p. 130).



of human interest in either, was necessarily short-lived. In the successors of Socrates we have the beginning of the separation of civic life, with its supposed bondage to the temporal, from the life of the spirit in the contemplation of the eternal. Plato's treatment of it is well known. While he thinks of the constitution of the State in accordance with the wisdom that comes from above as the vestibule into the higher life of communion with God, yet he is fain to doubt the capacity of the body of the citizens to enjoy that life in its fullness, and thus leaves us with a sense of the insignificance at once of the religious life for the citizen and the citizen's life for the philosopher. In accordance with his own philosophy of development, Aristotle seeks to heal the breach by conceiving the one as the potentiality of which the other is the complete realization. Ancient reflection on the subject may be said to have ended in his pregnant suggestion of the continuity that exists between them. "Nevertheless practical Wisdom is not the mistress of contemplative or of the more spiritual part of our nature any more than Medicine is the mistress of health. Practical Wisdom does not employ the other in her service, but provides means for the attainment of it—does not rule it but rules in its interest. To assert the contrary would be like asserting that statesmanship rules the gods because it issues orders about all public concerns."<sup>1</sup>

But Greek civic life, then in the last stage of exhaustion, was too weak to embody such an idea, and in the next generation the cleft was widened. The City of God was completely severed from the earthly State, and the latter was felt to have no claim to any but a conditional and symbolic loyalty. Christianity interpreted the city in the heavens in a sense which made resistance to the claims of the State a sacred obligation, and in the fullness of time such an attitude was bound to bring the Society in which it was embodied into conflict with the State. The result of the conflict is well known. For a moment, the problem

<sup>1</sup> *Ethics*, vi. fin. (Peter's translation).

seemed to be solved in the great days of the Papacy in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. But again, in spite of all the breadth and beauty of the outlines of the structure of the mediaeval theocracy, the denial of fundamental human interests, chiefly that of freedom of thought, contained the seeds of decay.<sup>1</sup> The day of the man and the citizen was yet to be, but in the first flood of reaction against the exorbitant claims of the Church the day of the State was destined to precede it.

It was this that found its most splendid expression in Spinoza's *Politico-Theological Treatise*. The philosopher's defence of freedom of thought on the ground that "the true aim of government is liberty," and that the denial of it "is the corruption of every good art,"<sup>2</sup> goes to the root of the matter. Unfortunately, he combines this with Erastian claims for the supremacy of the State as the "legitimate interpreter and champion of Divine right"<sup>3</sup> which go far to cancel the freedom he had asserted.

The meeting of these diverse influences in Rousseau is what makes his statement of the problem so central and arresting and gives the celebrated last chapter of the *Social Contract* a place beside the tenth book of Plato's *Laws* itself. Like Plato, Rousseau is profoundly convinced that citizenship must be imperfect without the hallowing touch of religion. "No State," he exclaims, "was ever founded without religion serving as its basis. . . . It is of the last importance for the State that every citizen should have a religion which may make him delight in his duties." Yet he sees no prospect of such a reconciliation in any of the three types of religion that are represented in history, which he designates respectively as the religion of the State, the religion of man, the religion of the priest. The last is rejected on

<sup>1</sup> See H. W. C. Davies' *Mediæval Europe*, chap. vi. "The Hildebrandine Church," and J. B. Bury's *History of Freedom of Thought*, chap. iii., "Reason in Prison." These two recent presentations should be taken as complementary to each other.

<sup>2</sup> Op. cit. chap. xx.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. chap. xix.

the ground that by giving men "two sets of laws, two chiefs, two countries, it imposes on them contradictory duties and prevents them from being at once devout men and citizens," and that "there results from it a kind of mixed and unsocial law which has no name." The first is good in so far as it combines Divine worship with love of the laws, and by making their country the object of the citizens' adoration teaches them that to serve the State is to serve the guardian deity, to die for one's country is to suffer martyrdom, to violate its laws is to be impious. On the other hand, it is evil because it is based on error and falsehood; because by becoming exclusive and tyrannical it makes a nation sanguinary and intolerant, putting it "in a natural state of war with all others, which is very prejudicial to its own safety." As contrasted with these the religion of man, holy, sublime, and pure, teaches men to recognize one another as children of the same God and as brethren united to one another in a social bond which is not dissolved even in death. But against this advantage has to be set the fact that it has no particular relation with the body politic, and accordingly leaves to the laws only the force that they derive from themselves without adding to them any other. More than this: so far from attaching the hearts of the citizens to the State, it detaches them from it and from all earthly things. "Nothing could be more contrary to the social spirit." If this is the true meaning of Christianity "a Society of true Christians would be no longer a Society of men."

Rousseau's own solution is hardly likely to commend itself more than Plato's or Spinoza's. There is to be a purely civic profession of faith in the dogmas of "the existence of the Deity, powerful, wise, beneficent, fore-knowing, and bountiful, the life to come, the happiness of the just, the punishment of the wicked, the sanctity of the social contract and of the laws." The list is probably derived from Plato, and as Plato does not hesitate to threaten with imprisonment those who believe other-



wise, Rousseau would banish from his State those who refuse adhesion to it and even inflict the last penalty on those who prove false to their profession, "not as impious but as unsocial, as incapable of sincerely loving law and justice and of sacrificing, if need, their life to their duty." The impossibility of such a solution perhaps requires no proof<sup>1</sup> to-day, but before we leave it, it is important to notice the precise reason why on a view like our own religious beliefs ought not to be imposed by the State. It is not that such beliefs are indifferent to the State. These or the equivalent of them more philosophically stated are, as we hope to show, the very breath of its life. Nor is it that it is impossible to control belief. Beliefs are the unstable product of changing circumstances, and it is quite possible to conceive of uniformity produced, as in the case of the Albigenses and of Spain, by a sufficiently drastic application of suppression. It is that on any view which makes the development of human will and intelligence the supreme end for which the State exists, and from the recognition of which in the last resort it derives its unity and strength, nothing can be more self-stultifying than to limit the freedom which human nature at its best is so constituted as to value beyond everything else. The result must be, as Spinoza long ago pointed out, either by stamping out all sincere desire for truth and creating a Dead Sea of stereotyped opinion to put an end to progress, or, failing in this, to put a premium on hypocrisy, than which "no greater misfortune can ever befall a State." Apart from this lamentable conclusion, the passage in Rousseau has enduring interest for the clearness of its statement of the problem as it concerns us to-day of the relation between what we have called the social and the spiritual selves and the boldness with which priority is claimed for the former. And the question which emerges is whether or not the relation can be so stated as to avoid

<sup>1</sup> For an excellent criticism of it see C. E. Vaughan's *Political Writings of Rousseau*, vol. i. p. 89 foll. Professor Vaughan points out that it has the support of Milton and Locke.

the difficulties which Rousseau found in the different interpretations that have been put on the latter.

### § 3. THE SOCIAL AND THE SPIRITUAL SELF.

If then, in this fashion, we take up the problem where he left it, we can distinguish three ways in which theory may attempt to deal with the objections he found to all of his three religions. It may seek to free what he calls the religion of man from the belief in God and from the other-worldliness which is apt to go with it. Or it may seek for a deeper ground than political expediency for the subordination of the spiritual to the social, which would imply the revival in modern form of the State in which there is "no pontiff but the Prince, no other priests than the magistrates." Or thirdly, it may seek to draw so clear a distinction between the social and the spiritual as to make it possible to assign them altogether separate interests and pave the way for a revival of Rousseau's religion of the priest.

#### (a) POSITIVISM.

The first of these is the method of Positivism, which, by substituting Humanity for Deity as the supreme object of love and adoration, seeks to cut away the ground from interests that might enter into rivalry with those of society, and so to heal the division between the religious and the social consciousness on the one hand, between the individual and the community on the other. It founds its claim to have re-established the unity of human nature on the identity of individual and social ends. Within the social whole the unity of man's interests is secured by the organic nature of society. In our own terms this means that organizing will find itself at home within the field of society, where since each is at once the creator and the creation of the other, the will which is embodied in the outer forms and institutions of the social world necessarily

responds to the inner individual will. On the other hand, in the world beyond, man's will has no assurance of any solid foothold: no certainty that its claims will be honoured.<sup>1</sup> Is such an antithesis seriously tenable? And is the religion which is based on it an authentic satisfaction of human need?

The difficulty of maintaining the affirmative from the point of view of philosophy in general has often been pointed out. There seems to be no ground for asserting the "synthesis" of individual and society which is not also valid for the synthesis of society and the universe on which its life depends, and whose unity is reflected in its own. The theory either goes too far in the assertion that the individual can transcend himself or it does not go far enough in asserting that the transcendence is limited to a unity with humanity. From the point of view of the present lecture we may try to bring out this instability in the positivist view by noting the ambiguity of the term Humanity itself. If it be taken in the sense, which on the basis of Comte's own nominalistic philosophy is the only really justifiable one, of a mere aggregate of the individuals it denotes, the mere multitude of the beings who actually exist, have existed, or will exist, there is nothing in the idea that can offer inspiration or support to a will the principle of which, as we have seen, is organization. Granted an instinctive sense of kinship with all that bears the form of human life, there can be no more interest for the human soul in such an organized and unresponsive multitude than in the supposed indifference of Nature. If, on the other hand, Humanity be taken in its truer sense as the embodiment of the qualities and achievements of the human mind and will, its science and art, its politics and religion, we have

<sup>1</sup> It was this that the founder of Positivism expressed in the contrast between a subjective and an objective synthesis, the first of which he claims to have established, the second to have rendered unnecessary (see E. Caird's *Social Philosophy of Comte*, p. 97).



indeed an idea that carries us beyond all forms of merely individual life—ultimately of social life in any limited sense. But it is impossible to stop there, seeing that the ideas of truth, beauty, and good which, as we have tried to show, constitute the essence of Humanity in this sense and alone give it value, cannot be consistently held to be the creation of Humanity. It may be only in human life that these ideas are apprehended as ideals, but to say that they are only reflected in human life and apart from it would cease to be, is to contradict mere matter of fact. On the contrary, in order to understand what human life is, we have to conceive of it as the reflection of an order of which it is only a part.

We are thus brought back by another line to the conclusion that Positivism either goes too far or does not go far enough.

It goes too far if it be taken to mean that wherever human life extends there we have the assurance that the will to good shall find itself at home. On what ground, we ask, can we assert that will and purpose have a foothold in so inorganic a thing as humanity which would not equally give them a share in Nature? The founder of the Religion of Humanity was here following only the logic of his own principles when he turned with suspicion from the idea of an organization of humanity at large, and even conceived of national development as he knew it in communities so large as England and France as in its nature hostile to the claims of the spirit. It was only going a step farther in the same direction when even within the small groups he was prepared to recognize he sought to confine the function of the State to the care of material interests, and by handing over the care of the spiritual to a new kind of priesthood to reintroduce the very division which Positivism seeks to heal. So far from being a reconsecration of civic society and a confirmation of its claim upon the individual conscience, this view is in reality a desecration and a weakening of this claim. Civic obligation and civic loyalty depend on the depth of

significance that is assigned by the individual to social purposes and social institutions and particularly to the State as the most stable and enduring organization of social will. Just in so far as it is sought to confine its function to the sphere of the temporal the call of citizenship ceases to be the call of the spirit.

On the other hand, Positivism does not go far enough if it means that we are justified on the grounds it offers in claiming validity for the beliefs that are necessary to inspire the will to the highest human service. For this purpose what is needed is faith in a response to our ideals beyond the circle of the social organism. That man may give himself with undivided energy to the realization of moral ends, it is necessary that he should believe that they have the support, not only of the social will which constitutes his immediate environment, but of the wider universe with which the destinies of humanity are inextricably bound up. As one of the most penetrating critics of Positivism has put it, "The tenderest harmonies of affection cannot be reached except by minds which are consciously at one with themselves and with the law of the Universe, and this *oneness* is what we call religion. Man can do his best work only when he feels that he is the organ or instrument of a power or spirit which is universal and therefore irresistible, which embraces and subordinates even that which seems to resist it."<sup>1</sup>

It is vain to look to poetry and art to fill the void which reason leaves as Comte himself did. Beauty, as Mr. A. J. Balfour has recently pointed out,<sup>2</sup> depends for its power over men's hearts, however little they may be conscious of it, on the belief that it has significance as the interpretation of a world which bears the mark of mind and will, and is therefore instinct with meaning. Only in virtue of this belief can poetry fulfil its moral function as

<sup>1</sup> E. Caird, *The Social Philosophy of Comte*, p. 160.

<sup>2</sup> *Theism and Humanism*, Lecture iii. p. 74 foll. It is not necessary to agree with Mr. Balfour's interpretation of Theism to go so far with him.

the pledge to man of the reality of his highest aspirations. Without it the poet becomes, indeed, "the idle singer of an empty day."

Our general conclusion is that there is no surer way of destroying the significance of civic life than with Positivism to seek to limit the intellectual outlook to the unity of social life and (reversing Aristotle's order) "to make practical wisdom the ruler of contemplative." It may be a question whether the old harmony between religion and citizenship can be recovered in our "age of reason." What seems certain is that it cannot be recovered by a philosophy which starts from the denial of the validity of man's belief in the response of the Universe to his deepest longings.

#### (b) STATE SUPREMACY.

The second method of reconciling the claims of citizenship and religion is to admit the latter to the fullest extent as far as the truth of its object is concerned, but to subordinate it to the State on account of the *form* in which this truth manifests itself to the spirit. The most famous statement of this view is probably that of Hegel in the *Philosophy of Law*. As the passage<sup>1</sup> has been made responsible for much in recent history, we may be excused dwelling on it for a moment. "Religion," we are told, "has absolute truth for its object and thus implies the highest attitude of mind. As intuition, feeling, imaginative knowledge occupying itself with God as the infinite Ground and Cause on which all things depend, it contains the claim that everything should be conceived in relation to this and reach its confirmation, justification, certainty in it. State and laws, like duties, receive in this relation for consciousness the highest verification and the highest binding power, seeing that even State, laws, and duties are in reality something definite which pass up into and find their foundations in a higher sphere. . . . While

<sup>1</sup> Op. cit. § 70.



religion thus constitutes the ground on which the ethical world in general and the State in particular rest, it is at the same time only the foundation, and it is here that they separate." Hegel goes on to indicate the difference in the form in which the truth appears in religion and in the State. In religion it is held in the form of feeling and imagination; in the State at its best, "the complete State," it has taken the "tremendous step" of being actually embodied in solid reality as a spiritual fact—to Hegel the greatest fact in the world. The State is not God, but it is the most definite and powerful witness to God in the world, and must refuse to give way to any authority that speaks merely from the heart, still more to any that treats civic experience as something outward and worldly. From these premises Hegel formulates the relation of Church to State. To the Church belongs the function of relating the actual world of civic life and duty to the will of God. So long as it takes up this positive relation to morality and the State, the State has not only the obligation to protect the Church in the temporalities which are a necessary part of its organization, but may take upon itself the duty of seeing that all the citizens should become members of a congregation.

In the face of exclusive claims on the part of the Church to the spiritual life as its concern, Hegel was undoubtedly right in asserting in the strongest terms the interest of the State in the whole circle of man's spiritual nature, in art, science, and religion, not only as means of education and a support to its own work of material progress, but as ends in themselves.<sup>1</sup> As itself an embodiment of Infinite Spirit the State cannot forgo concernment with man's relation to the Infinite. We must also regard as essentially true, though, of course, less true to-day than in Hegel's time, what he says of civic laws and institutions as the highest expression in the world of the spirit of right and that "rationality" which he held in the last resort to be identical with what is real and enduring. His

<sup>1</sup> See loc. cit. § 270, Note n.

critics have surely erred in failing to recognize the note that runs through the whole and that claims value and authority for the State, not on the ground of its material power, but on the ground of its interest in human freedom and the more complete development of human powers. But we have to admit, in the light of the subsequent history of these ideas, that to say that the "complete State" stands for universal ends, and to say that there is any guarantee in the world as we know it now that a particular State may not come to be dominated by a spirit which is ready to subordinate these to its own selfish interests, are entirely different things. It was not perhaps Hegel's fault that he failed to see the limits which the imperfections of the State as it actually exists imposed upon his doctrine of its essential nature and upon his claim for its right to suborn religion and the Church to its own ends. One would fain believe that the development of democracy, which has endowed the State with new power, will at the same time be able to endow it with a more lively sense of its true vocation in the service of the spirit, and thus bring citizenship and religion into closer harmony. But we have learned how easily, under special conditions of national temperament, history, and geographical position, a check may be put on this development.<sup>1</sup> Yet even at its best democracy cannot hope to escape the weakness of all mortal institutions, and cannot therefore afford to dispense with an institution which shall stand for the symbol of what is truest in itself and claim a deeper loyalty from the best of its citizens. And with this consideration our problem of the relation of Church and State recurs.

<sup>1</sup> It is not without significance in this connection that the politician who gerrymandered the German Constitution so as to falsify the expression through it of the general will should also have engaged in an unsuccessful *Kulturkampf* with the Church.

## (c) DUALISM OF TEMPORAL AND SPIRITUAL.

We have considered the attempts to reconcile the claims of the spiritual with the civic consciousness by the denial of them in the sense in which they have been asserted by historic religion and by the subordination of them to the State. It remains to consider the attempt that has been made on philosophical grounds to separate the temporal from the spiritual altogether and assign them independent spheres. The issue here, it is to be noted, is not of moral well-being *versus* social and political organization. We have already seen how arbitrary any attempt to limit the interest of the Church to moral character taken in abstraction from the field of its operation in society, must be. What conception of individual purity, sobriety, or justice could the Church seek to inculcate which abstracted from the institution of the family, conditions of the liquor trade, industrial and legal systems? The problem is here taken at a deeper level, and what is proposed by way of solution is to draw a line of division between the entire system of social life and secular morality as belonging to the world of mere appearance and the deeper reality of a spiritual world which it may foreshadow, but of whose substance it forms no part. Views of this type are familiar in the writings of some of the great religious leaders of our time such as John Henry Newman and James Martineau. But they find an echo in sociological writers to whom the natural origin and the secular claims of social life seem to condemn it as a medium of expression for what is highest in man. A passage from one of the most suggestive books on our subject will make this plainer than any paraphrase of it:—

“The real difficulty lies not so much in the present separateness of the self’s desires as in the permanent separateness of the individual’s aspirations. We can imagine a perfectly socialized citizen, whose self embraces all others and whose desires are only directed to the



admitted good of all. But we *cannot* imagine such a citizen freed from the antagonism which arises from the continual springing up of new ideals, unless, indeed, we suppose him to have lost his individuality altogether. And his social excellence will not save him from this kind of antagonism ; on the contrary, his life will be a constant example of the growing opposition of the better to the good, and of the best to the better. All traces of self and its antagonisms may have been purged out of him ; his every desire and resulting social action may be conditioned by the fact that he and his Society are one, in interest and aim ; but his idealism—the outpush of new ideals which are his own—will increase, and will mark a new plane of separation between him as an individual and his social life as a temporary condition of his activities. This is the fundamental antagonism from which no amount of perfecting by the social process can deliver us—an antagonism, not of a more or less narrow self to other selves, but of an eternally distinct individual to a Society to which, as an individual, he is eternally alien. As social persons we owe a debt to Nature and society to which it is hard to assign any limits. As souls we owe no debt at all. . . . The natural social man belongs to the world of sense impressions and perpetual change, the spiritual man to the world of realities by contrast with which this world is only a cave of shadows.”<sup>1</sup>

In criticizing statements of this kind, we must again limit ourselves to the point at which they particularly concern us in these lectures. To begin with it has to be admitted they have their value in reminding us that the soul has other relations and interests beyond those that are summed up in the term “citizenship” as usually interpreted. The world is larger than society. What we have to ask is whether this extension amounts to the antagonism on which this writer lays stress. The question is partly one of meaning and partly of fact. We may be prepared

<sup>1</sup> Professor E. J. Urwick's *A Philosophy of Social Progress*, pp. 224 and 235.

to admit a distinction between the "soul" or "spirit" and the social self, but we must insist on assigning some clear meaning to the terms. And when we come to define the meaning of "soul" we shall be able to find no other intelligible sense than the responsiveness of the mind to the idea summarized in such words as "truth" and "beauty" and "goodness." We may choose to express these in theistic language, but what we mean by Deity is the embodiment of these attributes in the form of a Will interpreted in the light of the best that we find in our own. Taken in this sense, can it really be maintained that soul owes nothing to society, that the mind's interest in these things has quite other roots than its interest in social well-being, and that it draws its nourishment from a wholly different plane of reality?

It seems plain matter of fact that, on the contrary, it is inconceivable how the love of these things could have developed except under the conditions of organized social life. It is true that the idea of a better—something truer, fairer, kindlier, and juster—must come as an inspiration of an individual mind and be born in his inmost spirit. But it is not true that it is an individual creation or can be born in a soul unfructified by the seeds of it already scattered throughout society. Religion is right in saying that this inspiration comes from God, but He is a God who has already revealed Himself in the achievements of society, whose footsteps are already in the mountains for those who are high enough (or it may be lowly enough) to discern them there.<sup>1</sup> It is always those who have seen deepest who have been the readiest to admit that they are not the creators of new meanings but the witnesses to the meaning already there. "What doest thou there, Elijah?" must be the ironical question addressed to all those who conceive themselves the solitary witnesses of what ought to be.

Equally far from the fact is the claim that these

<sup>1</sup> "O world as God has made it! All is beauty,  
And knowing this is love, and love is duty."

inspirations have quite other roots than have the social union and organization of men. It is the same will and affection in their search for comprehension, harmony, cohesion, and solidity that is at work *here* in science and philosophy, *there* in politics and religion. There is surely no more hopeful sign of present tendencies in religious thought than the refusal to separate between the ideals of science, art, and religion, and those of social affection. It is this essential unity that the great Catholic writer Baron von Hügel has in view when he insists that "Darwin's rapt interest in the interrelated lives of plants and insects, in a bird's colouring and a worm's instincts, are, in their grandly self-oblivious outgoing to the humble and the little, most genuine flowerings of the delicate Christian spirit in this fierce, rough world of ours. Without such real love, bridging over such real differences between realities possessed by varyingly deep inner lives such studies instantly become impossible or dry and merely inglorious or weakly sentimental." <sup>1</sup> In the same spirit, idealist philosophy has insisted that "the instinct of our physical science and naturalistic art, of our evolutionist philosophy and democratic politics, is not antagonistic to but is essentially one with the instinct which in the Middle Ages regarded all beauty and truth and power as the working of the Divine reason in the mind of man and in Nature. What a genuine though grotesque anticipation of Charles Darwin is there in Francis of Assisi preaching to the birds!" <sup>2</sup>

To all this it may perhaps be replied that the common spring of religion and social affection is not what is denied. It is not between these that "antagonism" makes itself felt, but between the atmosphere of freedom and elevation in which these both move and the restriction and narrowness of outlook of industrial and political institutions devised for temporal and temporary purposes and embodying from their very nature the spirit of exclusiveness.

<sup>1</sup> *Eternal Life*, p. 281.

<sup>2</sup> B. Bosanquet's *Civilization of Christendom*, p. 91.



To this objection the answer must again be an appeal to simple matter of fact. "You agree," we must say, "that the spirit of art, science, and religion, themselves one, is also one with the spirit of love which finds its first and last expression in ordinary life and the relations of man to man. The growth and fuller expression of the one is the growth and fuller expression of the other. Do you think that this expression becomes easier as social life develops? On the contrary, is it not obvious that in the complicated circumstances of modern life it becomes more and more difficult? There was a time when one's duty to one's neighbour lay at the door or at least by the wayside and was within the scope of the individual. Under modern conditions it has not only to be sought out, but has to be thought out. Paths have to be formed for fruitful effort, knowledge of how to use them has to be accumulated, forces have to be organized. Who, as a private individual, what private society even, is sufficient unto these things? The task that is set us by a religion that claims to have come that men might have life and have it more abundantly has outgrown all but the collective power of the whole community. Henceforth civic organization must bear a new significance. It can no longer be treated as something to which religion can afford to be indifferent. It is something essential to the active exercise of religion. Apart from it there can be no effective charity, no possibility of *finding* one's neighbour, no possibility therefore of finding oneself. It was some time before the Church made this discovery. It is still largely blind to it. But it was this—the discovery by the Church of the modern world, and not, as has been supposed, of the mediæval world—that was the secret of its revival in the middle of last century. We can understand the enthusiasm it awoke when it was made by Manning and the Christian Socialists of the time. At the present moment it is the most living thing in religion." For confirmation we do not ask you to go to philosophers "supporting a thesis," but

to the best Church writers themselves. "Here," writes Canon Scott Holland, speaking of the municipality, "is the organization by which we are linked up by one life in the common fellowship. Here is the instrument through which our will and care and love for our neighbour can take action. Here is the machinery by which to apply to the life of labour that lies close around us the principles of mutual service and the obligations of brotherhood. It covers the whole area. It reaches, like wisdom, from end to end. It penetrates where we cannot follow. It embraces all that is beyond our scope. The Town is the expression of our love for one another. . . . To the State we apply : that or nothing ; that or the denial of Christ's Lordship. If we are to love our neighbours we must believe in the power of the State."<sup>1</sup>

From the point of view thus reached there can be no essential opposition between the spirit of citizenship and the spirit of religion. The one means the soul's response to the most concentrated and coherent embodiment of the will to good which the human spirit has yet been able to realize. The other is its response to those features of the world at large—its beauty, goodness, and truth—in which the capabilities developed in and through this embodiment find the highest field of their exercise and the guarantee of their essential value.

#### § 4. PRACTICAL CONCLUSIONS AS TO THE RELATION OF CHURCH AND STATE.

We have tried to show the spirit in which the question of the relation between the State and religion must be approached. We have tried to prove that no true solution can be hoped for from the side of the denial of the interest for which religion stands. To seek with Positivism to deny the possibility of finding ground in experience for faith in the response of the world to man's highest ideals is to deny scope to his deepest interest. Nothing we may

<sup>1</sup> *Our Neighbours*, pp. 74 and 84.

say could be more fatal to the practical objects that Positivism has so finely championed than the establishment of the truth of its theoretic teaching. We have tried to show in the second place that, granted the reality of the religious interest as thus defined, it is impossible to subordinate it to the State without endangering the purity of its teaching as the witness to the real presence and power in the world of a truth and righteousness of which the actual State is a necessarily imperfect embodiment. Finally we have tried to show that while thus representing the higher interests of the spirit, religion springs from the same root as society, that it draws its first nourishment from it and relies in the last resort upon it for the opportunity of manifesting its power in life. While these conclusions do not of themselves provide an answer for the many practical questions that rise in connection with the adjustment of the claims of Church and State, they involve certain corollaries that furnish ground for a more hearty co-operation than at present exists. It must be sufficient to mention two that are most closely related to current controversy and that seem to indicate the lines on which a closer alliance may be hoped for.

(a) There can be no doubt that the main work of the Church must be that of direct witness to the existence and power of the Divine in the world. Nothing can be more fatal to this work than political propaganda in which the great issues of right and wrong are obscured by class interest, party passion, or the inherent complexity of the subject. Its attitude to these questions must find its analogy, not on the platform but in the lecture-rooms of universities where an effort is made to discover the principles that underlie them and to create the spirit of equity and of sympathy out of which a better understanding may come. On the other hand, in cases where the issues are plain any artificial attempt such as that already criticised<sup>1</sup> may very well be a betrayal by the Church of

<sup>1</sup> P. 293, above.



its militant office. "I do not think," writes Dr. Figgis, "any policy ought to be forwarded by the Church as a corporate Society and imposed in its name on a State of which Churchmanship has no longer anything to do with the qualifications of citizenship."<sup>1</sup> Why, we ask in connection with such a dogma, "in its name"? Why may not the Church unite with the better mind of the community and in the name of good citizenship in the advocacy of measures it deems essential to social well-being or in opposition to others it deems destructive of it, such as temperance reform and the marriage laws? In its attitude to these it may very well be mistaken, as we have already seen; but it is not too much to say that one of the main sources of the Churches' weakness at the present moment is the disappointment that those who are most deeply touched with the social spirit of the time experience in being left without their hearty, unanimous support in the great fight against social evil.

(b) A second corollary concerns the right of the State to undertake positive offices in the name of religion. It is agreed that the main work of the State is the maintenance of the conditions under which the Will-to-good may operate most freely and effectively in individuals and societies, including the Church. Active participation in that work itself must be justified by particular considerations such as economy of effort, the intrinsic importance of the service, or the failure of the Society entrusted with that service adequately to supply it. These considerations have, by general consent, been found to meet in the case of education; but it has been maintained that while this justifies the State in providing secular education, it provides no justification of its interference in religious. From the point of view here reached this must appear to be sheer dogma. The State, as we have seen, is profoundly interested in the maintenance in the coming generation of the belief in the reality of the moral order. In case, therefore, of the failure of the Churches to keep

<sup>1</sup> Op. cit. p. 128.

pace with the needs of the community, the State has both the right and the duty to see that the people do not perish for lack of a vision. This is the justification of the much derided "undenominational religion," and was urged in an unanswerable way by Professor Huxley on the first London School Board. It may be granted that it is an unsatisfactory expedient, but the reason of its unsatisfactoriness is not that which is usually urged. It is not that religious teaching of this kind must consist of colourless platitudes obtained by abstracting what may be supposed to be held in common by all denominations, but is really held without modification by none. One can hardly think that those who hold this view of it mean what they say, seeing that it amounts to the denial of any essential principle underlying the religious consciousness and manifesting itself in the various forms which it takes. The State is surely right in claiming that no one can reverently teach the love of man, the greatness and beauty of Nature, the ethical meaning of history without teaching the essentials of religion. Where undenominational religion fails is, not in the things that may or may not be taught under this title, but first in the lack of support its teachings have in the homes of the children, and secondly in the consequent difficulty of securing continuity through membership of an organized Society which may carry on the work it has begun. The State as Hegel knew it can hardly insist, as he seemed to think it might, on all children becoming members of a Church. But the State as we are now coming to know it takes a larger sweep, and intermediate institutions, combining its disinterestedness, comprehensiveness, and system with the sympathy and human touch of voluntary agencies, have made things possible to-day which were formerly impossible. Among these none are more hopeful than after-care committees and kindred organizations founded with the object of seeing that after leaving school children shall not become derelicts for want of interest in their after-life on the part of negligent parents.

Hitherto these admirable institutions have concerned themselves mainly with health and industrial settlement, but as this comes to be less necessary owing to better industrial conditions, it is to be hoped that they will find themselves freer to devote themselves to the ministration of spiritual things by seeing that every child has the opportunity of becoming a member of Church or Chapel or of a club connected with one or other.

Be the importance of these practical suggestions what it may, the conclusion to which we are led by our view of the general structure of human nature and of the institutions to which in the exercise of its creative and transforming activity it has given birth and continues to communicate life—is that, inasmuch as State and Church owe their origin to the same spiritual impulse and are joint partners in the same spiritual function, the adjustment of their respective parts offers no more inherent difficulty than in the case of any other of the organs of the common will. The main condition of success is the clearer recognition on the part of both of the high end to which they have each in its own place and degree the privilege of co-operating, and the readiness to subordinate other interests to that of the more effective realization of it.



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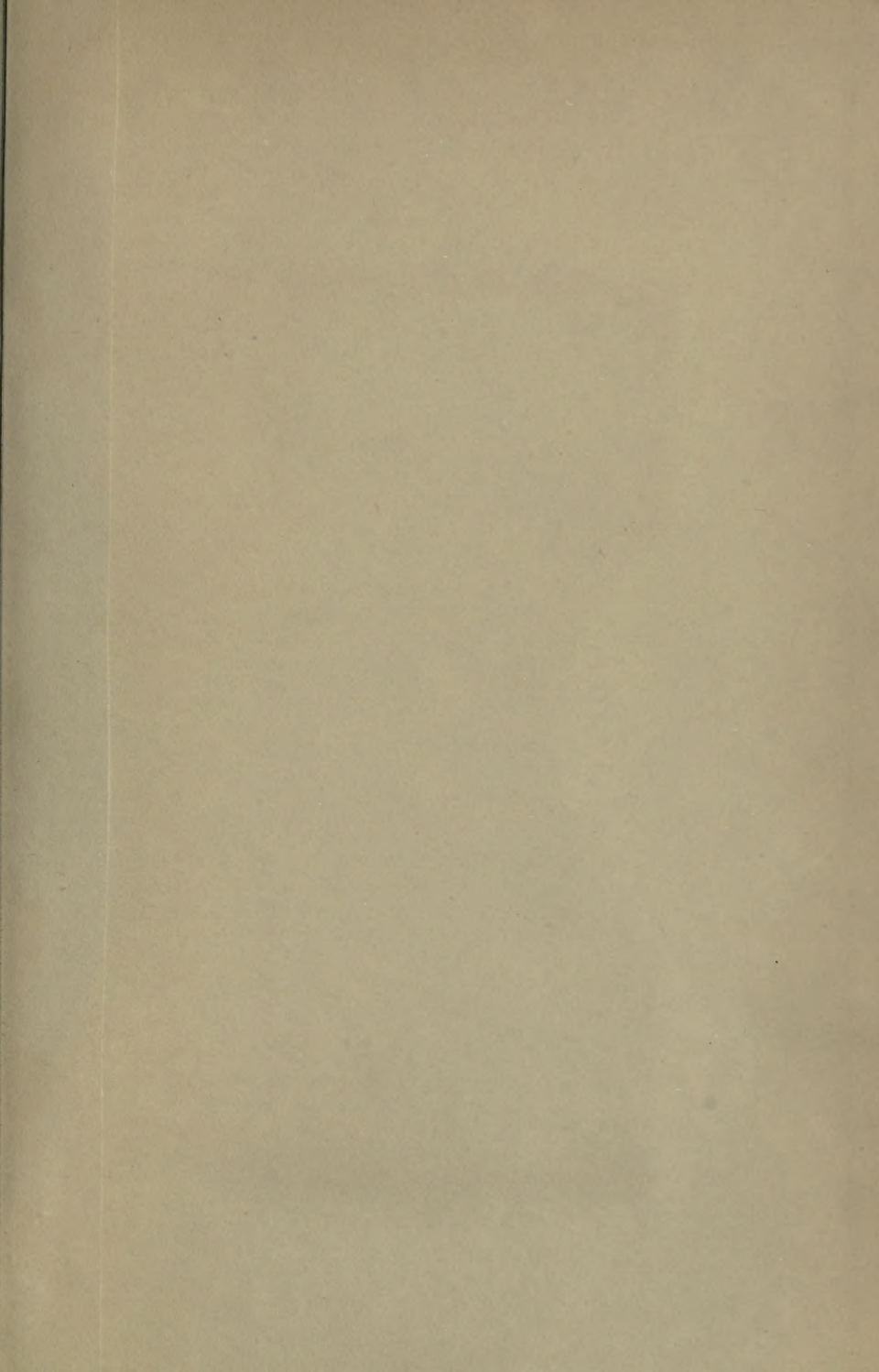
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